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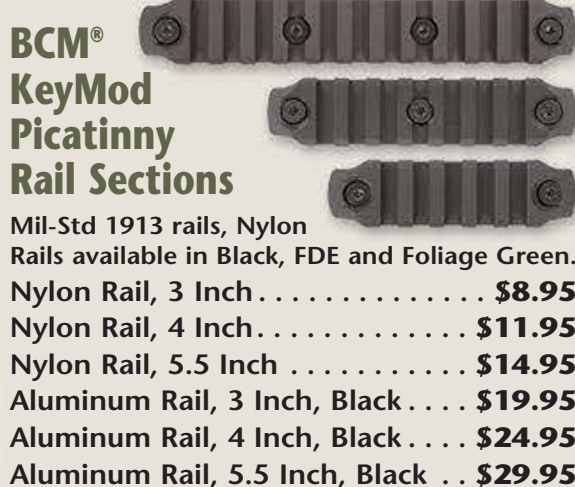
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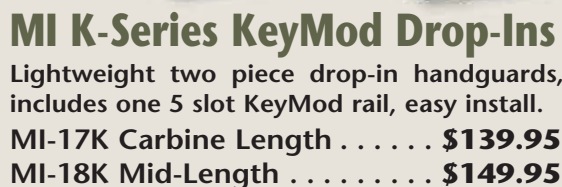
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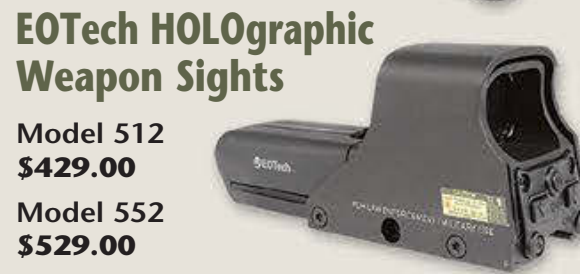
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TACTICAL WEAPONS®

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 2
MAY/JUNE 2015

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Everything happens for a reason. Our Creator works in mysterious ways.

I can't tell you how many times I've either heard those words spoken to me or uttered those words to others. Oftentimes, I speak them under my breath when I read or learn of a tragedy that just took place. It's a coping mechanism, no doubt, a way to reaffirm my faith in God, family and this country, the United States of America.

From this issue's cover alone, one can surmise the "All-American Sniper" theme with "The Legend" Chris Kyle running point, along with a look at Barrett's newest—and lightest—big-bore 98 Bravo. Harkening back to Vietnam-era sniper firepower, we test and evaluate an enhanced custom classic from The '66 Company. We also wring out some serious long-range steel from Seekins Precision, one of the new kids on the block.

And to celebrate Chris Kyle's life and legacy, we run a review of his book, *American Sniper*, and showcase some tribute rifles as well as his personal rifle, which was in the process of being built before Kyle's tragic death. To wrap the issue, we have the Gunny countersnipe the critics of the *American Sniper* movie who have little

use or respect for the driving forces that kept Chris Kyle going during his valiant four tours of duty in Iraq—God, country and family.

Speaking of those things, *Tactical Weapons* puts the spotlight on the state of Idaho, which is really becoming the next Gun Alley. Be sure to check out the one-of-a-kind AR rifle put together by several Idaho-based companies. This rifle truly epitomizes the beliefs and steadfastness of our founders and framers—plus, she's a real shooter!

Ever notice that the more politicians look to strip us of our Second Amendment rights, the more we Americans go on buying sprees? Well, for AR lovers, we have a packed issue that will help guide you through the maze of AR rifles, pistols, aftermarket stocks, slings

and more. Also in the editorial mix are three new CCWs from Springfield Armory, tons of new SWAT and shooting products uncovered at some recent trade shows, plus shotguns, tactical rides and an in-depth profile of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police's elite Zebra Unit.

Before you leave the Briefing Room to fully dive into this issue, I'd like to leave you with some final thoughts on Chris Kyle. In his book *American Sniper*, Kyle wrote, "I find some comfort in faith, and I found it in those days after my friends had been shot up. Ever since I had gone through BUD/S, I'd carried a Bible with me. I hadn't read it all that much, but it had

always been with me. Now I opened it and read some of the passages. I skipped around, read a bit, skipped around some more. With all hell breaking loose around me, it felt better to know I was part of something bigger."

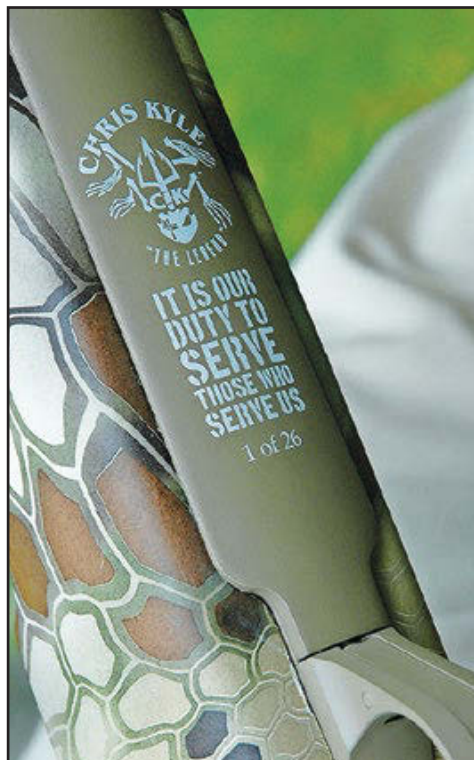
Part of something bigger. That about sums up the conflicting feelings I had while watching Kyle's remarkable life unfold in the *American Sniper* movie. A part of me struggled to enjoy the film's positives that Clint Eastwood and his actors created and to truly celebrate Chris Kyle—"The Legend," the SEAL, the husband, the father, the brother. I felt a deep-seated anger in knowing how the story was going to end. Why would this happen to such a great American?

Then it dawned on me.

Chris Kyle's story will never end. That's what happens to true American legends. As the credits rolled I started to come to terms with the irony that Chris Kyle and his fellow brother in arms, Chad Littlefield, were murdered by an ex-U.S. Marine who the two men were trying to help get his life back on track. Millions will see this movie, including the American warriors who know firsthand the price you pay being in a war. In many respects, I believe Chris Kyle is still pulling overwatch duty for our whole country.

Chris Kyle knew that we are all part of something much bigger. Perhaps that's the biggest lesson to be taken from his life story. Everything—no matter how irrational it seems—does indeed happen for a reason.

— Nino Bosaz



The 26 tribute guns are engraved with Kyle's initials "gripping" a trident, which is part of the frog skeleton—the recognized symbol of fallen U.S. Navy SEALs.

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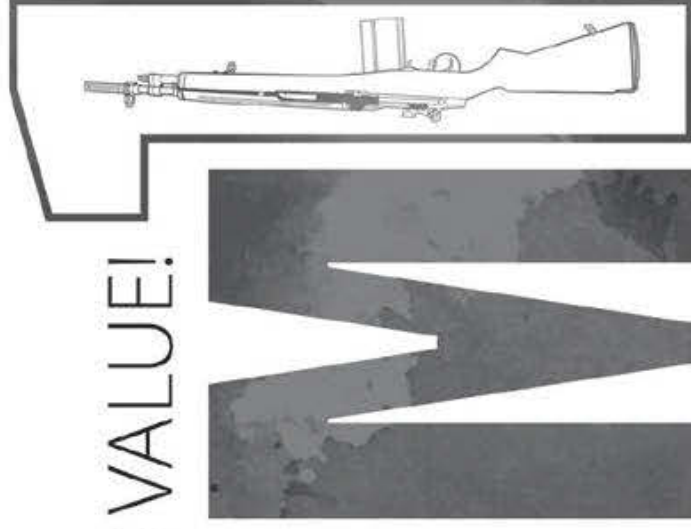
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||||| ON THE COVER

Barrett's 98B Tactical brings bolt-action precision into the 21st century. Shown with a Kahles 6-24x56mm K624i scope, a Shadow Tech Hog Saddle and a Davis & Sanford tripod.

“**THE 98B TACTICAL** is a serious weapon meant for sustainable long-range accuracy under the most stressful situations when lives might hinge on one well-placed shot.”

BARRETT 98B

**MEET THE NEW 9.25-POUND
"BABY BARRETT" THAT SCREAM
SUB-MOA PRECISION NO MATTER
THE GAME OR MISSION!**

BY JAY PINSKY
PHOTOS BY STRAIGHT 8

If every shooter was introduced to the .300 Winchester Magnum via Barrett's 98B Tactical rifle, the peppy but inferior .30-06 wouldn't be America's sweetheart caliber. That's how smooth, accurate and polite Barrett's bolt-action rifle handles the sizzling .30 caliber, which has a reputation for spectacular terminal performance and some attitude on the back end for its handlers.

Let me tell you how well the Barrett shot first, because at the end of the day that's what matters most. In a word, wow. The .300 Winchester Magnum has long been a first-round draft pick for snipers and long-range shooters because of its inherent accuracy and problem-solving downrange energy, and Barrett did everything right to make sure operators blessed with using

wow
wow
wow





STRAIGHT DOPE ON THE MODEL 98B

Long-range shooting enthusiasts and sportsmen shouted “Bravo!” in the fall of 2014 when Barrett announced the sequel to Chris Barrett’s first baby—the Model 98B in .338 Lapua Magnum. The new 98B Fieldcraft and Tactical variants have been refined with more user-adaptability and are now chambered in the classic .300 Winchester Magnum, .308 Winchester, 7mm Rem Mag, 6.5 Creedmoor and .260 Remington as

well as the original .338 Lapua Magnum.

The 98B variants now include the original, known as the Legacy, the Fieldcraft and the Tactical. All three come with 10-round mags, modular forends, Pelican cases with custom inserts, two QD swivel sling loops and an operator’s manual. Discerning riflemen should know that when you order your new 98B, it’s like you’re buying a semi-custom rig when you consider the various

options available. The finish choices on the Fieldcraft include black, OD green, Flat Dark Earth, multi-role brown, burnt bronze and tungsten grey, while the Tactical variant is available in black or tungsten grey. Barrel twist rate options include 1-in-9.35 and 1-in-10, and barrel length options for the three models are as follows: 20, 24 or 26 inches for the Legacy, 16 or 22 inches for the Tactical, and 18 or 24 inches for the Fieldcraft. Depending on your choices, the overall weight ranges from 9.25 to 13.5 pounds.

a 98B Tactical got every ounce of potential the magnum has. Everything I fed the Barrett, which included selections from Nosler, Federal, Black Hills and Hornady, shot well under 1 MOA, with Nosler’s factory ammo edging out Black Hills for top honors with a five-shot group average hovering at about a half-inch at 100 yards. Here’s the kicker, the rifle shot these groups hot or cold, and opening up to 10-shot groups didn’t phase the gun or the shooter because the well-designed platform kept all of the .300 Winchester Magnum’s

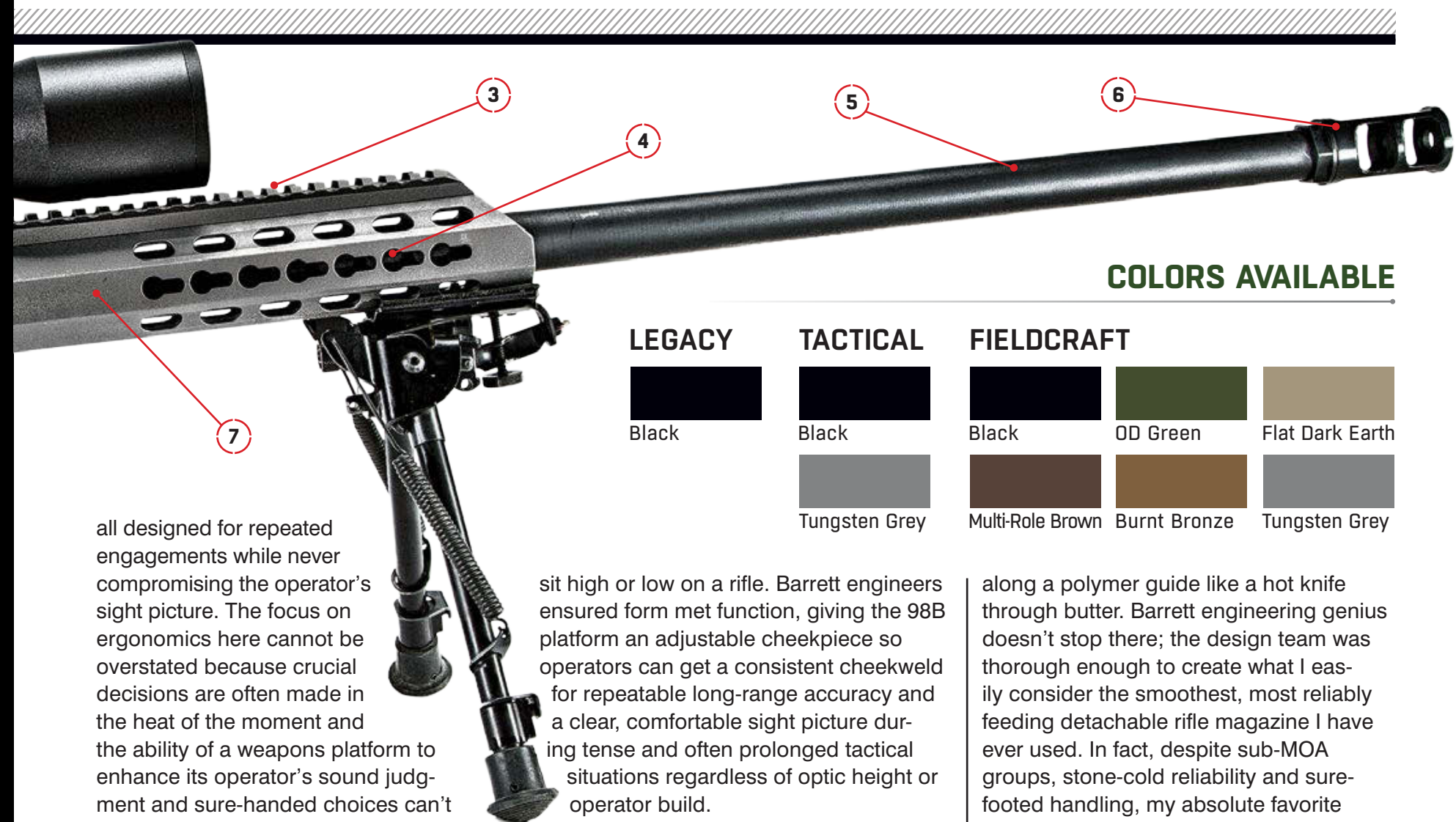
Type A personality downrange and not on my shoulder. The 98B Tactical is a big weapon, but it isn’t a clumsy tool for operators even remotely familiar with a bolt-action weapon.

BEHIND THE BEAUTY

The heart of the 98B, and really all Barrett rifles, is its robust build quality and functionality. When an operator is behind a 98B, he is in full control thanks to the confidence instilled by the well-sculpted pistol grip, fully adjustable trigger and intuitive safety,

BARRETT 98B DETAILS

- 1 The polymer cheekpiece is adjustable for height
- 2 The polymer bolt guide acts as a dust cover and provides for smooth cycling
- 3 20-MOA-offset Picatinny rail
- 4 KeyMod slots in the 3, 6 and 9 o’clock positions
- 5 Match-grade barrel
- 6 High-efficiency muzzle brake
- 7 Tungsten grey Cerakote finish
- 8 10-round polymer magazine
- 9 Ambidextrous magazine release is accessible while maintaining firing grip
- 10 Adjustable trigger for weight, sear engagement, overtravel
- 11 The chassis accepts standard AR pistol grips.
- 12 The buttstock accepts a height-adjustable monopod
- 13 Ultra-absorbent Sorbothane recoil pad



COLORS AVAILABLE

LEGACY



Black

TACTICAL



Black



Tungsten Grey

FIELD CRAFT



Black



OD Green



Flat Dark Earth



Multi-Role Brown



Burnt Bronze



Tungsten Grey

all designed for repeated engagements while never compromising the operator's sight picture. The focus on ergonomics here cannot be overstated because crucial decisions are often made in the heat of the moment and the ability of a weapons platform to enhance its operator's sound judgment and sure-handed choices can't be compromised for budgets, ethics or a lack of training. Precision weapons demand equally precise optics, which can

sit high or low on a rifle. Barrett engineers ensured form met function, giving the 98B platform an adjustable cheekpiece so operators can get a consistent cheek weld for repeatable long-range accuracy and a clear, comfortable sight picture during tense and often prolonged tactical situations regardless of optic height or operator build. The 98B Tactical's bolt handle is oversized for deliberate functionality with or without gloves and operates the bolt

along a polymer guide like a hot knife through butter. Barrett engineering genius doesn't stop there; the design team was thorough enough to create what I easily consider the smoothest, most reliably feeding detachable rifle magazine I have ever used. In fact, despite sub-MOA groups, stone-cold reliability and sure-footed handling, my absolute favorite aspect of the 98B Tactical was the magazine, which was easy to load and even easier to feed, remove and engage. After



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1. The Kahles 6-24x56mm K624i scope helped the author wring out the Barrett 98B Tactical's true long-range potential.
2. The rifle operated very smoothly during testing, from its slick action to its easy-to-load magazines and crisp trigger.
3. To get the most from the .300 WM round, the 98B Tactical comes with a 24-inch, match-grade barrel.

using it for more than a week, I wish Barrett would make magazines for everyone else, too. They're that good at it.

FORM MEETS FUNCTION

The 98B Tactical has smooth, clean lines and just enough macho in its looks to intimidate softer threats. Just forward of the receiver, Barrett engineers had the forethought to enable operators to remove enough of the top rail to allow for stout optics with large front bells, which might not fit on other weapons designed to perform the same missions as a 98B might be tasked with. Details like that give operators the confidence that Barrett doesn't just build an accurate rifle, but a usable, flexible tool that caters to the user and his need to vary his mission. Sure, operators can overcome large optics with higher scope mounting systems, but this dominoes into poor ergonomics with higher cheek welds, the need for less or more eye relief and a myriad of other distractions that are all avoided by simply engineering a removable rail. It also tells me that Barrett sweats the small stuff, and the \$4,199 investment is a wise choice.

Other key engineering features on the 98B Tactical include the fact that instead of

rails, Barrett gave the handguard KeyMod mounting points along the bottom, right and left sides, with the full-length, 17-inch, 20-MOA-offset Picatinny rail on top offering lots of optical flexibility.

The barrel runs 24 inches long with a match chamber, a 1-in-10-inch twist rate and a very effective muzzle brake. The fact that Barrett sculpted this rifle to weigh about 11 pounds unloaded gives credit to its engineering efficiency.

OUT TO 400 YARDS

On the range I used a Kahles K624i 6-24x56mm optic to make the test all about the rifle, and it was. The only thing crisper

SPEC BOX

BARRETT 98B TACTICAL

CALIBER: .300 Win Mag

BARREL: 24 inches

OA LENGTH: 38.56-49.75 inches

WEIGHT: 9.25-13.5 pounds (empty)

STOCK: Skeletonized

SIGHTS: None

ACTION: Bolt

FINISH: Tungsten grey

CAPACITY: 10+1

MSRP: \$4,199

PERFORMANCE

BARRETT 98B TACTICAL

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Black Hills 190 BTHP	3,007	0.61
Hornady 150 Custom Lite	2,737	0.81
Hornady Custom 180 Interlock	3,007	0.86
Nosler Custom 190 AccuBond LR	2,905	0.50

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

than the image from that Kahles was the trigger on the 98B Tactical. Kahles makes a fine tactical riflescope, and the robust 34mm-tubed optic locked in targets easily at ranges from 100 yards well out to 400 yards. The scope's generous 3.5 inches of eye relief offered me plenty of flexibility while the first-focal-plane targeting reticle and elevation and windage adjustments gave me plenty of room to shoot the .300 Winchester Magnum as far and as precisely as I wanted.

Single-shot operations were smooth, reliable and repeatable, with all ammunition shooting accurately. Engaging multiple targets was simple and methodical, with a smooth bolt stroke, silky feeding from the magazine and the ergonomics of the controls—the safety, trigger and bolt handle—all making shots easier at 100-, 200- and 300-yard targets. The well-balanced rifle allowed me to fire, re-sight and fire without worrying about harsh recoil, muzzle jump or excessive movement in the prone and sitting positions. While the rifle is no lightweight based on today's superlight standards, I felt I could carry it far enough and long enough to employ it for my needs, sporting or tactical, and not feel spent.

BARRETT QUALITY

There are quality firearms, and then there are Barrett firearms. The Barrett 98B Tactical probably doesn't compel a casual plinker to whip out his wallet. An MSRP of \$4,199 sends a clear message that the 98B Tactical is a serious firearm meant for sustainable long-range accuracy under the most stressful situations when lives might hinge on one well-placed shot. Still, when a rifle has the reputation it can deliver each and every time, \$4,199 seems like a bargain, whether you're a casual shooter or the purchasing officer for your police department, government agency or private contractor. For more information, visit barrett.net or call 615-896-2938. **TW**



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PRO-GRADE

PRECISION

If you're seeking the Holy Grail of AR accuracy, Seekins Precision is the place to start!

>>> BY DAVID BAHDE



Several cutting-edge upgrades are built into the SPR03GL to make it a sub-MOA tack driver, including the SP3Rv3 rail, which has KeyMod slots and a flat bottom for stability. Shown with an Atlas bipod and an X Products drum mag.

“The carbine’s reliability was excellent, as you might expect. These rifles are essentially custom builds, put together one at a time...”



This Pro Series rifle features a .223 Wylde chamber and a match-grade, 14.5-inch barrel with Seekins' ported ATC muzzle brake permanently welded in place to help cut down on muzzle rise.

Seekins Precision is a perfect example of American ingenuity, drive and a willingness to go it alone rather than accept what is out there. It's another situation where someone builds a "better mousetrap" and turns it into a thriving business. In this case it started with a set of scope rings and resulted in one of the premier AR rifle builders today.

Glen Seekins was an avid hunter looking for a better way to mount his scope to his rifle. While the scope rings he had worked on occasional hunts when a few rounds were fired, they fell short during long hunts in the rugged mountains of Idaho. There were a few out there designed for precision rifle-shooters, but they were steel—heavy and costly. Less costly mounts were weak and moved, ruining consistency. Glen wanted something better and returned from the hunt set on building a better set of rings.

I had similar experiences as a police marksman during this same time period. Many officers were issued the same scope rings and mounts that failed on Glen. During one training course, my partner's scope fell off during a low crawl, making the final shot extremely difficult. Stronger rings weighed a ton and were hard to get. Lucky for me, Glen decided to do something about it. He borrowed some shop time and built his own set of lightweight rings. Made from aluminum, they matched the material most scopes were made of and held up under hard use. They worked so well that word spread quickly.

Selling rings on the side, Glen decided to take a bit of risk and purchase a CNC machine rather than borrow shop time. Working in his garage with help from his wife, Katie, the business grew to the point where he could quit is full-time job. Next, he moved the company into its own shop and built his first billet lower receiver. After some success, Seekins Precision began offering complete rifles, and now the company is housed in a state-of-the-art, 25,000-square-foot facility in Lewiston, Idaho. I attended the building's grand opening in 2014, and everyone present could see that the future for Seekins Precision was bright. I also got a chance to shoot some Seekins rifles, and I quickly arranged to test more at my home range.

PRECISION DEFINED

I first tested the Seekins Precision Pro Series SPRO3GL, a cutting-edge rifle set up for delivering top precision, whether it's on duty, in the field or in competition. The SPRO3GL begins with Seekins' iRMT-3 billet upper receiver with a 14.5-inch, match-grade stainless steel barrel installed. Precisely machined, the upper features a .223 Wylde chamber for enhanced accuracy and M4 feed ramps for reliability. Seekins' ATC muzzle brake is permanently pinned and welded to the muzzle. Its ports are designed to provide a minimal dust signature while cutting down on recoil and muzzle rise. The bolt carrier, low-profile gas block and gas tube are all Melonite coated for corrosion resistance.

Surrounding the barrel and low-profile gas block is a 12-inch SP3Rv3 handguard. Designed for precision work, it is flat along the bottom and rounds nicely to the continuous top rail. This makes it easy to use the carbine on bags, barricades or other surfaces for a solid purchase. KeyMod slots in the 3, 6 and 9 o'clock positions allow for the addition of rails and other accessories.

The billet-crafted SP223 lower receiver includes a built-in ambidextrous bolt release, a billet magazine button and an extended triggerguard. This lower was

SPEC BOX

SEEKINS PRECISION SPRO3GL

CALIBER:	.223 Wylde
BARREL:	14.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	28.25 inches
WEIGHT:	7 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Magpul STR
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$2,255

The SP223 lower receiver is machined from a billet of 7075-T6 aluminum and features a beveled magazine well for fast reloads.



also equipped with a Geissele Super Semi-Automatic (SSA) two-stage trigger, Magpul's STR carbine stock installed on the six-position buffer tube and an Ergo deluxe pistol grip, which provides for excellent control. Finally, the lower features the BAD ambidextrous safety.

For testing I added my Atlas bipod using a short KeyMod rail mounted to the bottom of the handguard. For targeting I used a 1-6x24mm scope with an illuminated duplex reticle for better aiming at range. I installed the scope in a set of Seekins' 30mm rings, which made for a slim, solid mount.

ROUNDS DOWNRANGE

Right off the bat, this SPRO-3GL's accuracy is excellent. I used one at the grand opening event, and just about everyone was able to regularly hit targets at 300 yards with this carbine. Thanks to the muzzle brake, it is soft shooting and moves very little. My best group, measuring 0.4 inches, was produced with Silver State Armory's 77-grain OTM ammo. There is just something about Seekins' matched receivers that produce incredible accuracy. Right behind the Silver State load was Hornady's 75-grain BTHP, which produced a best group measuring 0.5 inches. The SPRO3GL tended to like the heavier bullets, although it also did well with Liberty's 55-grain Silverado ammo. Nothing fell outside of 0.75 inches at 100 yards. Glen tells me this platform's design has gone into the company's 7.62mm NATO rifle, and it is producing similar accuracy. I can't wait to test it, but it looks like Seekins has

THE HISTORY OF SEEKINS PRECISION

2004 Thanks to a bad experience on a hunt, Glen Seekins decides to build his own set of scope rings. He develops a CAD program and borrows some machining time to build them.

2005 His scope rings become so popular that Glen Seekins buys his own CNC machine and moves it into his garage. By the end of the year he is able to quit his full-time job and just make his tank-tough scope rings.

2007 Seekins' rings grow so popular that he has to move out of his garage into a 1,500-square-foot building. He also develops his first AR-platform billet lower receiver.

2010 Adding employees and machinery, the company outgrows its current facility and moves into a 7,500-square-foot building. By now, Seekins Precision is making a complete line of AR-platform rifles and accessories.

2013 Seeing the writing on the wall, Seekins buys land just outside of the airport in Lewiston, Idaho, and starts building a new facility.

2014 Seekins Precisions moves into its state-of-the-art, 25,000-square-foot building. It provides enough room for the company's complete line of rifles and accessories as well as room for significant growth.



PERFORMANCE

SEEKINS PRECISION SPRO3GL

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Hornady 60 TAP	2,657	0.66
Hornady 75 TAP BTHP	2,570	0.50
Liberty 55 Silverado	2,840	0.70
Silver State Armory 64 PPT Bonded	2,855	0.75
Silver State Armory 77 OTM	2,678	0.40

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

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SEEKINS' 300 BLACKOUT SBR

When it comes to the CQB environment, the 300 AAC Blackout has become my go-to cartridge. Loaded with full-power self-defense ammunition, the ballistics are impressive—about as good as it gets from across the room to any practical police or self-defense engagement distance. Even with a short barrel, the 300 BLK surpasses the 5.56mm in every meaningful category; it's soft shooting, reliable and incredibly conducive to suppression. I've used several 300 BLK rifles and built a couple, but my Seekins Precision SBR has become my chosen workhorse in this caliber.

The Seekins Precision SBR uses the company's proven SP223 Gen 2 billet receivers and 12-inch MCSR handguard, which is set up to cover a suppressor and is KeyMod compatible, allowing for a clean rail space as well as purpose-built accessories. The

stainless steel, match-grade, 8-inch barrel features M4 feed ramps and 5/8x24 threading to accept most suppressors. Cooling fins cover the barrel, and an adjustable gas block is also installed. Seekins' M16 bolt carrier group and BCM's Gunfighter charging handle round out the package.

TORTURE TESTING: I've used this rifle for almost a year now, firing thousands of rounds and testing numerous suppressors. Currently, I've equipped it with a Law Tactical Gen 3 Folding Stock Adapter and Elitelron's new BattleDog suppressor. For targeting I use an Aimpoint red dot or the Trijicon SRS. Capable of sustained fire with most any ammunition, the SBR works well with all magazines, including the X-15 drum from X Products. Its accuracy is stellar, too, with Remington Match ammo shooting into 0.6 inches at 100 yards. With the stock folded,

the SBR fits into my 2 Vets Arms Covert pack perfectly and is always close at hand.

If you are looking for what may be the perfect entry or self-defense carbine, make sure you check out this 300 Blackout SBR.



The author's 300 BLK SBR, built on Seekins' SP223 receivers, has run reliably with numerous suppressors and magazines, including the Elitelron BattleDog and X-15.

PERFORMANCE

SEEKINS PRECISION SBR

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
DoubleTap 110 TTSX	2,055	1.40
DoubleTap 240 Match	955	0.55
Gem-Tech 187 PT	1,040	0.45
Hornady 110 V-MAX	2,175	1.25
Hornady 208 A-MAX	900	0.51
PNW 125 Match	2,107	1.00
PNW 147 Practice	1,857	1.50
PNW 155 Match	1,900	1.25
Remington 125 OTM	2,088	0.65
Remington 220 OTM	1,032	0.50

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

SPEC BOX

SEEKINS PRECISION SBR

CALIBER: 300 BLK

BARREL: 8 inches

OA LENGTH: 31 inches

WEIGHT: 8 pounds (empty)

STOCK: Vltor IMod

SIGHTS: None

ACTION: Directimpingementsemi-auto

FINISH: Matte black

CAPACITY: 30+1 (50+1 w/X-15 drum)

MSRP: \$1,995 (as tested)

this part of the build process down pat.

Next I engaged targets at 200, 300 and just a tad under 400 yards, and this rifle did not disappoint. I used a couple different programs on my iPhone to get the proper measurements. Wind was not much of an issue, so hits were regular and easy. For those looking to compete, this muzzle brake works really well. The rifle barely moves, so I could easily watch hits and make fast follow-up shots.

Flat-bottomed handguards on precision bolt rifles are anything but new; making them work well on an AR has been a bit more problematic. There are a few out there, and the SP3Rv3 handguard is a really nice one. Mounting a small rail to attach the Atlas bipod, it worked great from prone. Removing the bipod, the handguard sat nice and flat on my pack. The handguard also worked well on a couple of barricades. I also used it in positions with sandbags, and it provided about as solid a rest as possible under field conditions. Where it really shined for me was shooting from a braced kneeling position. The handguard allows the rifle to truly rest in my hand without rolling to either side. The entire design

Seekins' New Ambidextrous Safety

» After rigorous testing and evaluation, Seekins Precision's new ambidextrous safety selector will now be made available to the public. Designed with the same attention to detail as all Seekins Precision parts, this new safety selector offers a fully ambidextrous configuration and both a 90- and 60-degree control lever in a single drop-in package. It has an MSRP of \$40 and comes with a limited lifetime guarantee.

"Our ambidextrous safety selector is one of those parts that every rifle is going to need" said Kevin Weyrauch, Seekins Precision's business development coordinator. "We wanted to make sure it met our quality standards and could live up to the Seekins Precision name while offering it at a price level that everyone could manage."



lends itself to precision shooting. Along with the KeyMod slots, there are QD sling points at both the front and rear of, making it useful in any tactical environment.

The carbine's reliability was excellent, as you might expect. These rifles are essentially custom builds, put together one at a time, so you expect them to work, and this rifle did not disappoint. The SPRO3GL carbine had no issue digesting every round from 55 to 77 grains, placing each case into a nice little pile.

CUSTOM GRADE

It is always nice to see someone take an idea and turn it into a successful business. It happens less frequently than it probably should. It takes hard work, dedication and a strong commitment. It's a huge bonus when the end product is truly excellent. The firearms industry seems to do a good job of this. Sprinkled among those just looking for a quick buck are the innovators with a vision and the drive to take it to the next level. Glen Seekins and Seekins Precision epitomize that idea. Starting with simple scope rings, Seekins Precision now builds some of the finest AR rifles and accessories you can buy. From the looks of the new facility, it's unlikely the company will outgrow it soon, but if history is any indication, that just may not be the case! For more information, visit seekinsprecision.com or call 208-743-3400. 

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Ruger's newest entry into the AR-platform market is the AR-556, a direct-impingement carbine that comes with several enhancements, including a threaded, cold-hammer-forged barrel and Magpul PMAG, for only \$749.

BEST BANG

AR-15 RIFLES



THESE **SUB-\$1000 ARS** CAN PROVE THEIR PLACE ON THE RANGE OR DURING MISSIONS WITHOUT BREAKING THE BANK!

▶▶▶▶ In the past, affordable AR-15 rifles were a mixed bag. All too often, an inexpensive price meant cheap parts and poor quality assembly. In recent years, however, this has substantially changed. Good quality rifles with budget-minded prices have become much more common. A perfect example of this is the new Ruger AR-556.

BY RICHARD JOHNSON

Photos Courtesy of
Manufacturers

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	.223 Wylde
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32-36 inches
WEIGHT:	7 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1

ALEX PRO FIREARMS ECONO CARBINE

» Even though the name Econo Carbine suggests a bare-bones model, Alex Pro Firearms gave this gun some nice upgrades, including a .223 Wylde chamber and a Magpul MOE handguard. Unlike most optics-ready rifles, this gun actually ships with one: the Vortex StrikeFire II red dot sight. The MSRP is \$800. (apfarmory.com; 320-852-3040)



AMERICAN TACTICAL OMNI HYBRID MAXX

Chambered in 5.56mm NATO, the Omni Hybrid MAXX uses metal-reinforced polymer upper and lower receivers to help keep the weight—and price—down. The rifle has a low-profile gas block, a 16-inch barrel and an adjustable buttstock. Unlike many of the other rifles in this roundup, the rifle is equipped with a 7-inch quad-rail handguard. Its total weight is only 6.5 pounds, and the MSRP is \$675. (americantactical.us; 800-290-0065)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32-36 inches
WEIGHT:	6.5 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$675



ARMALITE DEFENSIVE SPORTING RIFLE 15

It may be inexpensive, but the Defensive Sporting Rifle (DSR) 15 from Armalite is not cheap. The rifle has a chrome-lined, 16-inch, 1-in-7-inch-twist barrel that is threaded and topped with an A2-style flash suppressor. It is ready for the sighting system of your choice and is fitted with an adjustable stock. The rifle weighs less than 6.5 pounds and ships with a 30-round Magpul PMAG. The MSRP is \$700. (armalite.com; 800-336-0184)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32-35.25 inches
WEIGHT:	6.35 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$700



DARK STORM INDUSTRIES SPORT

This optics-ready AR-15 has a low-profile gas block with a carbine-length gas system. The Sport has a 7-inch quad-rail for lights, lasers and other accessories you might want to add to the gun. The gun has a billet lower, a 16-inch barrel with a 1-in-9-inch twist rate and a six-position stock. The MSRP is \$795. (dark-storm.com; 800-963-7700)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32-36 inches
WEIGHT:	7 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$795



DEL-TON ALPHA 220H

Equipped with a heavy 20-inch barrel as well as an A2 upper and buttstock, the Alpha 220H has a classic AR-15 look. The longer barrel maximizes the potential velocity of the ammo, while the iron sights allows you to get it on the range immediately. These rifles have an MSRP of \$793. (del-ton.com; 910-645-2172)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	20 inches
OA LENGTH:	39.5 inches
WEIGHT:	8.2 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Fixed
SIGHTS:	A2 front, carry handle rear
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$793

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SPEC BOX

DEL-TON DT SPORT OR

If you are looking for a solid, optics-ready AR-15, the Del-Ton DT Sport OR (Optic Ready) deserves your consideration. It has a low-profile gas block to allow an unobstructed view through a scope. A 16-inch barrel with a 1-in-9-inch twist rate is standard, as is the A2-type muzzle device and six-position-adjustable stock. The MSRP for the DT Sport OR is \$707. (del-ton.com; 910-645-2172)

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32.6-36.4 inches
WEIGHT:	6 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$707



SPEC BOX

DIAMONDBACK DB15SB

The DB15SB uses forged 7075-T6 upper and lower receivers with a 4140 chrome-moly barrel. The barrel is 16 inches long, has a 1-in-9-inch twist rate and is topped with a birdcage-type muzzle device. The buttstock is an adjustable ATI Strikeforce model on a commercial buffer tube. A rear sight does not ship with the gun. The suggested retail price is \$756. (diamondbackfirearms.com; 877-997-6774)

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32.5-36.3 inches
WEIGHT:	6.65 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	A2 front
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$756



SPEC BOX

DPMS A1 LITE 16

One of the lightest rifles in this lineup, the DPMS A1 Lite 16 weighs only 6 pounds. The upper and lower receivers are forged from 7075-T6 aluminum with an A1-style upper. The 16-inch barrel has a 1-in-9-inch twist rate and an A2-style birdcage flash suppressor. The stock is a Pardus adjustable unit on a commercial buffer tube. The MSRP is \$769. (dpmsinc.com; 800-578-3767)

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32.5-36.5 inches
WEIGHT:	6 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Pardus
SIGHTS:	A2 front, carry handle rear
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$769

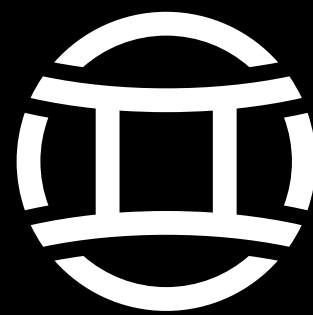


SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32-36 inches
WEIGHT:	7 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	A2 front
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$788

DS ARMS ZM4

Fitted with a Hogue pistol grip, a six-position buttstock and a flat top, the ZM4 ticks many of the boxes on an AR-15 shopper's list. The good news is the rifle doesn't cut back in other areas that matter even more. It uses 7075-T6 upper and lower receivers. The 16-inch barrel is made of 4140 chrome-moly steel and has a 1-in-9-inch twist rate. The MSRP is \$788. (dsarms.com; 847-277-7258)



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FULTON ARMORY FAR-15 STOWAWAY For proof that a quality rifle can be very affordable, take a look at the FAR-15 Stowaway rifle from Fulton Armory. This gun comes with a 1.5-MOA accuracy guarantee and weighs only 5.75 pounds. Standard features include a 16-inch, match barrel, an M16 bolt carrier and a fixed, “shorty” stock. The rifle even ships with a sling, a magazine, an owner’s guide, a 30-day money-back guarantee and limited lifetime warranty. (fulton-armory.com; 301-490-9485)

SPEC BOX	
CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32.25 inches
WEIGHT:	5.75 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Fixed
SIGHTS:	A2 front, carry handle rear
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$800



HARDENED ARMS M4 Using a strong forged lower as the base, the 5.56mm M4 rifle from Hardened Arms has a 16-inch, chrome-moly barrel with a 1-in-9-inch twist rate. The gun has a carbine-length gas system, a low-profile gas block, a six-position stock and a Melonite finish. It also comes standard with a free-floating quad-rail handguard. The MSRP is \$749. (hardenedarms.com; 425-530-0837)

SPEC BOX	
CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32-36 inches
WEIGHT:	7 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$749



SPEC BOX	
CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	35.75 inches
WEIGHT:	7.37 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$714

OLYMPIC ARMS PLINKER PLUS FLAT TOP Equipped with a low-profile gas block, this AR-15 allows the shooter to add front and rear sights of his or her choice. This makes it easy to add a scope without having a traditional A2-type post obstructing the view. The gun comes with a 1-in-9-inch-twist barrel. All Olympic Arms rifles come with a lifetime warranty. The MSRP is \$714. (olyarms.com; 800-228-3471)



SPEC BOX	
CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32.75-36 inches
WEIGHT:	6.38 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	MFT Minimalist
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$950

REBEL ARMS RENEGADE The Renegade ships with Mission First Tactical (MFT) furniture, including the lightweight Minimalist stock and the MFT two-rail handguard with covered rails at the 6 and 12 o’clock positions. The 16-inch nitride-treated barrel has a 1-in-7-inch twist rate, and the bolt carrier group has a QPQ nitride treatment for lower friction and heat. The MSRP for this rifle is \$910. (rebelarms.com; 855-732-3527)



SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32-35 inches
WEIGHT:	6.45 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	A2 front, Magpul MBUS rear
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$739

SMITH & WESSON M&P15 SPORT

The M&P15 Sport is one of the hottest AR rifles on the market today. The gun uses 7075-T6 aluminum receivers and has a 16-inch barrel with a 1-in-9-inch twist rate. Both the gas key and bolt carrier are chromed. Sighting is handled with an A2-type front post and Magpul MBUS rear. A six-position-adjustable buttstock is standard. The MSRP of the rifle is \$739. (smith-wesson.com; 800-331-0852)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	32-36 inches
WEIGHT:	6.5 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	A2 front, UTG carry handle rear
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$800



TACTICAL WEAPONS SOLUTIONS TWS01-EL

Running a proven direct gas impingement system, the TWS01 is a flattop AR-15. The 16-inch barrel has a 1-in-9-inch twist rate and is outfitted with an A2-type flash suppressor. The upper and lower receivers are forged from 7075-T6 aluminum. The rifle also has a six-position-adjustable stock. The MSRP is \$800. (twsarms.com; 844 783-8210) **TW**

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The term Olde School dates back to the early 1800's. It refers to a traditional and common way of doing things. The Olde School from POF uses a direct impingement operating system and is packed full of functional benefits that POF excels at delivering like complete ambidextrous controls, 11.5" M-LOK compatible M-Rail, E2 extraction technology and a straight Inconel® gas tube. The inconel® gas tube takes reliability to the max by nearly doubling the heat the gas tube can sustain. The Olde School truly combines the old with the new.



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DYNAM-**AK** RIFLES



BY JORGE AMSELLE



Dan Tabar Photo

Build your own and master the ins and outs of running and gunning with the iconic Kalashnikov!

The AK-47 family of rifles continues to increase in popularity in the United States. However, due to import restrictions enacted by President George H.W. Bush in 1989, the AK rifles you see today are mostly built in the U.S. from foreign parts kits. Building an AK from a mix of foreign- and U.S.-made parts is both simpler and more complex than it seems—specifically simple in design, but complex in execution.

There are only a few highly skilled custom gunsmiths in the U.S. who specialize in building or fixing AKs to their maximum performance levels, and Rifle Dynamics in Las Vegas, Nevada, is one of them. The company was started in 2007 by Jim Fuller with an emphasis on using the best parts—U.S. and foreign—available. Fuller, an expert trainer specializing in ComBloc firearms, has been an active fan of the AK platform since the 1980s. He saw a need for high-quality armorers/gunsmiths who understood how to build real fighting guns for hard use, and that started him working on his own weapons.

DYNAMIC MAKEOVERS

Fuller told TW the most popular upgrades done at Rifle Dynamics are front-end rebuilds, suppression tuning, action tuning and refinishes. In a front-end rebuild, the barrel is first removed and straightened. A surprisingly large number of barrels it receives are bent. Next, the gas block and front sight are removed and replaced with Rifle Dynamics' own front sight/gas block combo. "This procedure moves the gun's center of gravity about 4 inches closer to the body, making it very fast handling with

no over-swing," said Fuller. Finally, the barrel is headspaced, re-threaded and properly crowned, helping to improve accuracy, and a new muzzle device is added.

The suppressor tuning work involves balancing the gas system to prevent it from being over-gassed when using a suppressor while making sure that the rifle continues to function reliably without it. The end result is a more pleasant/effective gun to shoot with and without a suppressor.

The company offers standard package deals for AK owners to fix guns bought elsewhere. According to Fuller, "There seems to be a general lack of knowledge on proper methods, workmanship, tools and materials used in the construction of the AK. Many American builders do not understand the 'Eastern' design intent and often try to apply 'Western' solutions that are not always the best choice."

What is the difference? Think Swiss watch versus Russian tractor. We are used to high precision and tight tolerances in our firearms. The Eastern mindset favors loose tolerances and flexible sheet-metal structures and ammunition with easy-to-extract tapered cases.

AK CHECKUPS & FULL BUILDS

Every gun Rifle Dynamics receives goes through a thorough inspection process—



Rifle Dynamics gives every project hands-on attention and care to ensure it produces the finest AK variant possible.

CCP

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BUILT IN GERMANY





checking the headspacing, gauging the barrel, checking the riveting on the receiver and inspecting the straightness of the barrel, blocks, trunnion and sights. The customer gets a complete diagnostic report with recommended and needed repairs/upgrades and the total cost of the work.

Rifle Dynamics will also build you an AK from your own parts kit, and the company offers standard upgrade packages for the most popular AKs on the market, including the Rumanian WASR, the Chinese MAK-90, Yugoslavian AKs, Bulgarian Arsenal builds and Russian Saigas.

Standard upgrade packages include dehorning all of the sharp edges and a complete sandblasting and re-Parkerizing of all the metal parts. Also included is

the installation of a Krebs Custom retainer plate, custom trigger fitting, the gas blocks and sights are fixed to correct any canting, and the safety lever, magazine catch and bolt/bolt carrier are all properly fitted to the rifle. The gas piston is properly pinned to the bolt carrier; however, if this was improperly installed to begin with, then the entire bolt carrier has to be replaced.

Rifle Dynamics also installs its own modified rear sight, which has the notch widened for easier and faster sight acquisition. Then the company checks the headspacing, corrects it if needed, and then test-fires and zeroes the finished rifle.

Rifle Dynamics offers a full suite of custom work for the most popular AKs on the market, from assembly (left) to precision lathe work (center) to custom fitting of KeyMod handguards (right).

AMERAKAN MADE

For all custom AK builders and manufacturers, the biggest challenge has always been the availability of parts, which have traditionally come from overseas. Until recently, there has not been enough demand or enough of a market to justify producing parts

in the U.S. That has changed, with more and more gun owners buying AK rifles. "New U.S.-made AK parts have been showing up around the industry. The nitride-coated barrels we have been getting lately are of very good quality. They have proven to be accurate and durable in testing on heavy machine guns," said Fuller.

— Continued on page 122



BUILD YOUR OWN AK

One of the most interesting courses offered by Rifle Dynamics is the "Build Your Own AK" class. This is designed as a complete and comprehensive armorer's course that shows the students how to build an AK rifle from the ground up. It is not for the timid, however, and requires a three-day commitment. Rifle Dynamics provides everything you need for the class starting with parts kits that are typically Hungarian or Polish. Students receive a U.S.-made and serialized receiver and brand-new, American-made, nitrided barrels in either 7.62x39mm or 5.45x39mm.

OPENING DAY: The first day is spent on lectures with various displays schematics, and discussions on the design of the gun

and the tools and methods used for its construction. But don't be fooled into thinking that you will just sit there watching slides. This is very much a hands-on course, and by the end of that first day the receiver will be about halfway completed.

BUILD DAY: The rifle's final build occurs on day two, with the assembly of all the parts that have been previously finished and Parkerized, including all U.S. compliance parts.

RANGE DAY: Day three is spent on the range test-firing and zeroing the rifles and becoming familiar with their operation and any troubleshooting issues. Once back at the shop, any concerns or issues encountered are addressed and repaired.



AK GRAD SCHOOL: Students who want custom work or accessorizing can leave the rifle with the shop for that work to be completed at a later time. Extras or more customized gunsmithing work can also be completed during an advanced rifle-builder class. Once completed, the guns can be shipped to an FFL dealer or transferred to the students in-

house. Everything you need, from tools to expertise, is provided. In the end, students have the satisfaction of knowing that they built their own gun exactly the way they want it and to the level of perfection they desire. Combined with the intimate knowledge of the ins and outs of the AK rifle, students are prepared to address any issues they may encounter.



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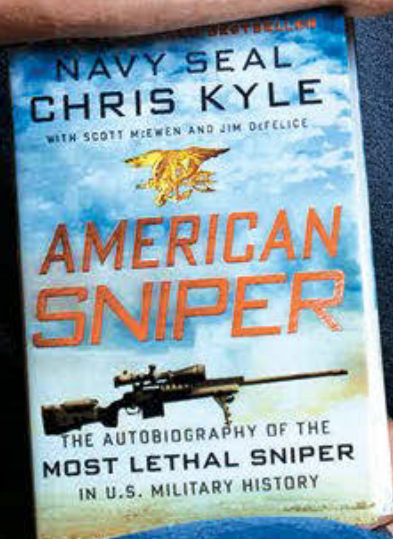


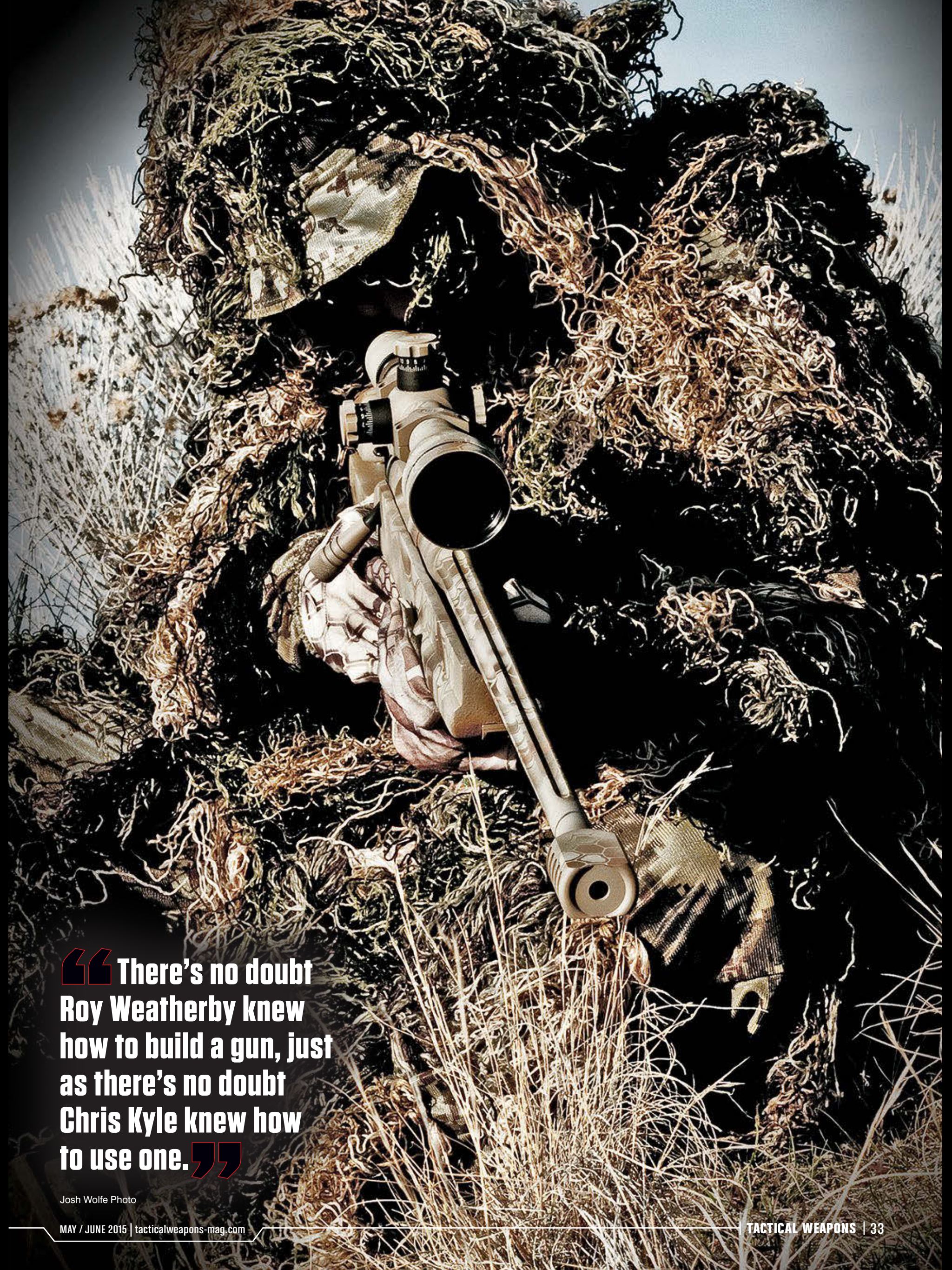
JOIN US AS WE PAY TRIBUTE
TO NAVY SEAL **CHRIS KYLE**
WITH PINPOINT PRECISION.

>>> BY JAY PINSKY

On February 2, 2013, freedom lost one of its greatest warriors when former Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer Chris Kyle and his friend, Chad Littlefield, were killed trying to help a retired U.S. Marine in their home state of Texas. The families mourned. Texas, America and anyone who knew freedom joined them as news spread around the world that America's deadliest sniper had fallen. Freedom has a lot of fans, and so did Chris Kyle.

Weatherby was one of those fans. The legendary rifle-builder known for powerful precision rifles and uniquely intimidating calibers was wooing the combat veteran to join its team before he was killed. Then, the match made sense because Kyle made a career out of being better, faster and always deadlier than his targets, and Roy Weatherby built a firearms dynasty with his rifles and Weatherby magnums, which flew projectiles farther and hit harder well after conventional calibers quit. Both Kyle and Weatherby made a living off of being able to do a little more than anyone or anything else, and both men loved hunting. Sadly, Kyle was gone too soon for his family and friends, and the Weatherby family mourned the loss of a great American just like everyone else.





**“There’s no doubt
Roy Weatherby knew
how to build a gun, just
as there’s no doubt
Chris Kyle knew how
to use one.”**

Josh Wolfe Photo



In 2012, Kryptek Outdoor Group, in conjunction with Weatherby, Leupold and MCM Firearms, was in the process of building Chris a custom Weatherby Mark V RC in .338 Lapua Magnum. The striking, one-of-a-kind rifle (shown on page 33 and at right) was to be the then-Kryptek Elite Pro Staff member Chris Kyle's extreme-range, backcountry hunting rig. Sadly, Chris was never able to get behind the finished masterpiece. But upon completion, the rifle still made an indelible mark on the Kyle family. In early 2014, at the Weatherby Foundation International Hunting and Conservation Award Dinner in Dallas, Texas, Chris Kyle's Mark V went to auction. All of the proceeds went to Chris Kyle's wife, Taya.

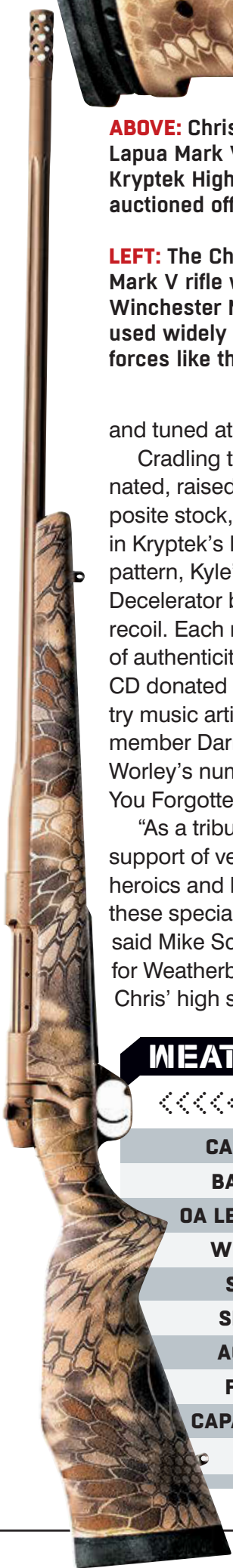
To further immortalize the greatness of Chris Kyle's life and to help Taya and the Kyle family, Weatherby followed up with its Limited Edition "Chris Kyle" Tribute rifle. Only 26 of them were made.

CHRIS KYLE .300 WIN MAG

"Chris was originally going to be a part of Team Weatherby," said Brad Dykhouse, marketing specialist for Weatherby. "When we learned of his passing, we at Weatherby wanted to show our respects as well as support his family through their difficult time. We decided to create the limited-edition Chris Kyle rifle and give the proceeds to the Kyle family."

The California-based gun-builder started with its finest by choosing the Mark V Accumark action. Smooth, reliable and inherently accurate, Weatherby chambered the limited-edition rifles in Kyle's favorite caliber, the battle-proven .300 Winchester Magnum, installed a 26-inch, fluted, button-rifled, free-floating, stainless steel barrel with a muzzle brake and finished the barreled action in Cerakote. A CNC-machined aluminum bedding plate provides a strong platform for securing the barreled action to the stock.

Every rifle was given a customized floorplate with the incredibly unique Chris Kyle Frog logo laser-etched into the metal. The trigger is fully adjustable



ABOVE: Chris Kyle's one-of-a-kind .338 Lapua Mark V TRR RC rifle, covered in Kryptek Highlander camo, was recently auctioned off to benefit his family.

LEFT: The Chris Kyle Limited Edition Mark V rifle was chambered in .300 Winchester Magnum, a chambering used widely by special operations forces like the U.S. Navy SEALs.

and tuned at the factory.

Cradling the metal is a hand-laminated, raised-comb, Monte Carlo composite stock, and the furniture is finished in Kryptek's Highlander camouflage pattern, Kyle's favorite. A Pachmayr Decelerator buttpad helps reduce felt recoil. Each rifle came with a certificate of authenticity and a special-edition CD donated by platinum-selling country music artist and Team Weatherby member Darryl Worley. The CD included Worley's number-one smash hit, "Have You Forgotten?"

"As a tribute to Chris Kyle's vigorous support of veterans, his own battlefield heroics and his love of hunting, we offer these special commemorative rifles," said Mike Schwiebert, VP of marketing for Weatherby. "We feel they live up to Chris' high standards of performance

and 'bad-ass' looks while reflecting his tremendous spirit and strength."

MAGNUM POWER

We all know Kyle could shoot, but how good are the Weatherby rifles? We wanted to know. *Tactical Weapons* dared not test such a unique and remarkable rifle as the limited-edition Chris Kyle Weatherby, but we wanted to give Weatherby's remarkable reputation a test drive, so we asked the good folks at Weatherby for the next best thing, a Mark V Terramark RC. Since Kyle's favorite chambering, the .300 Winchester Magnum, wasn't available, we asked for Roy Weatherby's favorite—the .257 Weatherby Magnum.

Before we even get to the hardware, let's take a look at one of the most remarkably fast and flat-shooting calibers in history. There's no doubt Roy Weatherby knew how to build a gun, just as there's no doubt Chris Kyle knew how to use one. Weatherby also knew how to build a great hunting caliber, and his go-to gun was the quarter-bore rocket. Weatherby designed his .257 Magnum in 1944 and made it available the following year as a wildcat cartridge in his rifles. The .257 Weatherby Magnum's family tree began with the .375 Holland & Holland, which led to the .300 H&H Magnum and finally to the

WEATHERBY SNIPER STEEL

◀◀◀◀◀	Chris Kyle Limited Edition Mark V	Mark V Terramark RC
CALIBER:	.300 Winchester Magnum	.257 Weatherby Magnum
BARREL:	26 inches	26 inches
OA LENGTH:	46.63 inches	46.63 inches
WEIGHT:	8.75 pounds (empty)	8.75 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Composite	Composite
SIGHTS:	None	None
ACTION:	Bolt	Bolt
FINISH:	Kryptek Highlander	Desert camo
CAPACITY:	3+1	3+1
MSRP:	\$3,400	\$2,800

The author tested Weatherby's "Range Certified" Mark V Terramark with a 26-inch, fluted, free-floating barrel held in a composite, desert camo stock.

Josh Wolfe Photo

.257 Weatherby Magnum's father, the H&H Super 30, which inspired a shorter, necked-down, .25-caliber flame-thrower pushing lighter 87-grain bullets at over 3,800 fps.

Bullets from the 87-grain flyweight all the way up to the massive 120-grainers are available in the .257 Weatherby Magnum, and even with the 120-grain bullet, muzzle velocities still scream at around 3,300 fps, which is hundreds of fps faster than its conventional cousin, the .25-06 Remington, which seems to be pedestrian at only 2,990 fps with the same 120-grain bullet. Of course, more bite usually means more bark, and the muzzle blast and barrel life of the .257 Weatherby Magnum delivers, as does the premium cost of the specialized Weatherby ammunition. Weatherby isn't the only place you can get factory-chambered ammunition, however, with Nosler, HSM and Hornady offering choices as well. Still, when you want less than 20 inches of drop at 500 yards from an 87-grain bullet, it's going to cost you. As a hunting caliber, the .257 Weatherby Magnum is hell on just about anything in the lower 48, with Weatherby recommending its use up to medium-sized game. Roy Weatherby himself took the .257 to Africa and harvested a Cape buffalo just to prove he could, but that's not a feat Weatherby recommends.

TERRAMARK RC

Now let's get to the hardware, the rifle. The Weatherby Mark V Terramark RC, which stands for Range Certified, is at the

Chris Kyle Mark V TTR RC

.338 Lapua Magnum
26 inches
48 inches
9.25 pounds (empty)
Composite
None
Bolt
Kryptek Highlander
4+1
N/A

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“This rifle easily met the accuracy challenge, creating groups well under 1 inch at 100 yards with six different kinds of ammunition.”

top of the quality pyramid in Weatherby's arsenal, and for good reason. The Mark V action is the heart of the rifle thanks to its unique bolt and receiver. Weatherby said its Mark V action changed the face of American firearms when it broke onto the firearms scene in 1958. Weatherby claims its Mark V action is the world's strongest bolt action due to its three rings of steel surrounding the casehead, fluted bolt body with three gas ports and nine locking lugs (six on non-magnum models) for a short 54-degree bolt lift. Is it the strongest? Who knows, but it's certainly strong enough for anything Weatherby's hot rod engineers have dreamed up so far with the .257 Magnum being the little guy in a room full of massive Weatherby magnums like the .340 Magnum and of course the .460 Magnum.

The Mark V action is paired with a button-rifled, #3-contour, free-floated, fluted, stainless steel barrel with a recessed target crown, which is cradled in a hand-laminated, raised-comb, Monte Carlo composite stock with a matte gel coat finish in desert camo with a Pachmayr Decelerator buttpad.

BOOK REVIEW

AMERICAN SNIPER



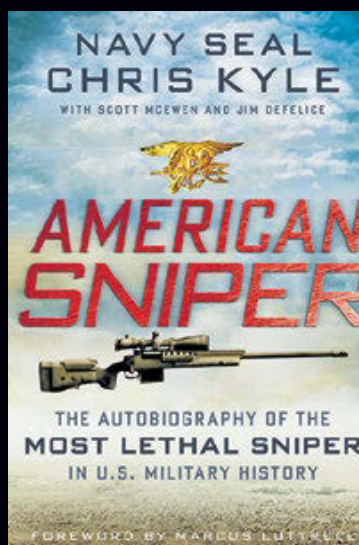
As the saying goes, the book—especially when written by the man who lived the stories—is better than the movie, which by all accounts is going to break all manner of box office records.

This book review, written days after author and retired Navy SEAL Chris Kyle's death, made me go back and re-read *American Sniper: The Autobiography of the Most Lethal Sniper in U.S. Military History*. The perspective of

his non-credited co-author, his wife, Taya Kyle, provides an eerie and ironic perspective. "It's taken me years to get my head around some of this stuff. On the surface, Chris wants to just go and have a good time. When people really need him though—when lives are on the line—he is the most dependable guy. He's got a situational sense of responsibility and caring..."

Chris Kyle and friend Chad Littlefield, both of Midlothian, Texas, were murdered on February 2, 2013, by a Marine suffering from PTSD, whom they had befriended to help him work through his troubled return to civilian life.

FIGHTING TO PROTECT: Co-written with Scott McEwen and Jim DeFelice, *American Sniper* is a laid-back narrative that follows Kyle through his youth in Texas to becoming a sniper with SEAL Team 3. Deployed in Iraq, Kyle highlights his participation in the urban battles for Fallujah and Ramadi. Fighting to protect fellow soldiers, he shares



numerous accounts of killing more than 250 military combatants. Not content to provide just long-range surgical strikes, Kyle joined fellow soldiers as they went from house to house, rooting out insurgent fighters and killing them in ultra-close-quarters battle.

Homage Kyle paid to a fellow SEAL, Mike Monsoor, mirrors the way many felt about Kyle. "Petty Officer Monsoor's actions could not

have been more selfless or clearly intentional...he had the only avenue of escape away from the blast, and if he had so chosen, he could have easily escaped. Instead Monsoor chose to protect his comrades by the sacrifice of his own life." Petty Officer Monsoor leapt on a grenade to protect two other SEALs, was killed by the blast and was later awarded the Medal of Honor. Kyle lost his life trying to give aid to a fellow troubled Iraq veteran. More than 7,000 people attended Kyle's memorial service in Texas Stadium on February 11, 2013. Kyle was buried the next day in Austin, Texas, after a funeral procession from Midlothian, Texas, to Austin that stretched over 200 miles. The funeral procession, according to the Texas Department of Public Safety, may have been the longest in American history.

I personally count it an honor to have briefly met Chris Kyle. Learn what duty, honor and patriotism mean through the eyes of a warrior in *American Sniper*.

—Jay Langston



Weatherby is proud of this rifle because it comes with a factory shot target signed by Ed Weatherby and includes a special RC-engraved floorplate, backed with a sub-MOA claim that reads: "Weatherby Mark V Range Certified rifles are guaranteed to shoot a three-shot group of 0.99 inches or less at 100 yards when used with specified Weatherby factory or premium ammunition."

At the range, the bolt-action Mark V Terramark RC in .257 Weatherby Magnum, Roy Weatherby's favorite round, ran smoothly and reliably, printing extremely tight sub-MOA groups at 100 yards with help from a Meopta scope.

RANGE CERTIFIED

This rifle easily met the accuracy challenge, creating groups well under 1 inch at 100 yards with six different kinds of ammunition. The best group came from Weatherby's own 100-grain spire points, which created a five-shot group measuring 0.45 inches and recorded an average velocity of 3,546 fps. The speed demon never felt uncomfortable to shoot thanks to its 26-inch barrel and well-designed stock, despite the rifle only weighing just a hair over 8.75 pounds. The .257 Weatherby Magnum, while peppy, isn't a bruiser to its owners, so it's relatively easy to shoot accurately, which only enhances its reputation as a long-range killing round on wild game.

I found the rifle to be typical of my experience with Weatherby rifles in that it was smooth to feed, shoot and recover and not only shot beautiful little groups but looked just as good as it shot. The trigger is crisp and predictable. The rifle's length of pull, a reasonable 13.63 inches, was a bit long for my arms. If I owned this rifle, I'd have my local gunsmith adjust the stock.

The tiny groups were easy to see with Meopta's MeoTac 4-16x44mm Mil-Dot tactical riflescope, which sat atop a Picatinny

PERFORMANCE

Weatherby Mark V Terramark RC

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Hornady Custom 110 Interbond	3,320	0.65
Nosler Trophy Grade 110 AccuBond	3,420	0.50
Weatherby 100 SP	3,546	0.49
Weatherby 100 TSX	3,452	0.56
Weatherby 115 Ballistic Tip	3,356	0.53
Weatherby 120 Partition	3,275	0.69

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

rail. The Czech-built optic tracked flawlessly and handled a very accurate rifle's loads in sub-freezing temperatures. Meopta makes a lot of good glass, especially when bang-for-the-buck is a consideration. The optic held its zero over three shooting sessions and gave me simple, reliable adjustments while being lighter than I expected. Meopta claims that its proprietary ion-assisted MeoBright lens multi-coating

eliminates glare and reflections and delivers an industry-leading 99.8-percent light transmission per lens surface. I had no scientific way to measure this claim, but the image was sharp and the mechanics of the riflescope worked flawlessly.

The Terramark RC rifle shot well and looks terrific. While the 26 Chris Kyle rifles are long gone, Weatherby knew its best technology, no matter how chest-poundingly intense it was, could never match the soul of a hero like Kyle. "When we announced the limited-edition Chris Kyle rifle, all 26 were sold within 48 hours," said Dykhouse. "This is the quickest-selling limited-edition rifle Weatherby has ever done."

FIGHTING ON

Weatherby continues to work with the Chris Kyle family. Taya Kyle recently joined the Weatherby team to further her work with veterans and their spouses. In fact, Taya Kyle recently killed her first antelope on a Weatherby-sponsored hunt. If you would like to help the Chris Kyle family and the causes he sacrificed his life for, visit the Chris Kyle Foundation at chriskylefrog.com. For more information on Weatherby, visit weatherby.com or call 805-227-2600. **TW**

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➤ The sleek XD-S 4.0 in .45 ACP from Springfield Armory shoots like a full-sized pistol but carries like a compact despite its big-bore chambering.



Like others in the XD-S series, the 4-inch-barreled .45 features a durable polymer frame with high-traction grip texturing and a Picatinny rail for adding lights and lasers.

To make the smaller XD-S appeal to an even larger segment of the market, Springfield recently increased the barrel length from 3.3 inches to 4 inches and named the new version the XD-S 4.0. Initially it was chambered in 9mm, but now it is also chambered in .45 ACP. And with a slightly longer barrel, compared to the original XD-S' 3.3-inch barrel, the .45 ACP should perform a bit better because of increased velocity. Another advantage is a slightly longer sight radius, making it easier to shoot accurately. Finally, that additional length adds a bit of weight to the front end to help reduce muzzle rise. So, for the officer or civilian who needs a thin, easily concealable backup gun in .45 ACP, the XD-S 4.0 is a strong candidate.

XD-S SPECS

The XD-S 4.0 is available as either a bi-tone model with a matte stainless steel slide and a black, polymer frame (like my test gun) or as an all-black version with a Melonite-finished slide. The rear of the slide is deeply serrated for a positive grip, and all the corners are nicely rounded to reduce the possibility of snagging on clothing or abrading skin. Up top, the rear sight is black steel with a wide square notch, two white dots for fast targeting, and a serrated rear surface to help reduce glare. The front sight comes with a red fiber-optic insert that gathers up every last possible amount of ambient light, making it appear to glow, even in sunlight. A green fiber-optic insert is supplied with easy-to-follow installation instructions. The front and rear sights are dovetailed into the slide so they can be drift-adjusted for windage.

»» BY DOUG LARSON

Since being introduced in the early 2000s, Springfield Armory's XD line of pistols has become very popular. That's because of the series' reliability, ergonomics and the wide variety of variations and chamberings. After introducing the XD, the company followed with the XD^M version that included modifications like a larger magazine capacity and interchangeable backstraps that enhanced the already excellent pistol. Springfield then debuted the XD-S version, which built on all the features that made the other XDs so popular but added a twist. Instead of a double-stack magazine, a single stack was used and the barrel was shortened to make the gun easier to carry discreetly.



XD MOD.2 SERIES

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY isn't resting on its laurels of XD success. No, sir. This year Springfield invites shooters to get into the GripZone with the new XD Mod.2 subcompact series available in 9mm, .40 S&W and .45 ACP. These new handguns offer refined contours, a new grip-to-hand interface and the superb front and rear sights developed for the company's latest .45 ACP and 9mm XD-S models.

Based on the 3-inch-barreled XD Sub-Compact, the new Mod.2 gives you an outstanding combination of the proven 3-inch barrel length with features from the latest XD-S 9mm. In outward appearance the Mod.2 sports a new contour to the polymer frame, changing how the frame integrates with a new slide design. It is a more refined pistol that is easier to handle, has slightly leaner dimensions and is faster to get on target.

At the heart of the Mod.2 is a new multi-surface grip texturing boldly molded into the grip strap. It is called the GripZone, and it is literally embossed into the side panels. The new design has varying surface

textures, a concept based around the dynamics of the human hand. The three-quarter panel, where the palm swell and the first joints of the fingers wrap around the grip, is the most aggressively textured for a firm, tactile hold. The front and rear surfaces are the second most aggressively textured where the palm and the insides of the fingers grasp the pistol. Combined, the front, rear and three-quarter panels make the Mod.2 less prone to movement during recoil. Additionally, the Mod.2 trigger-guard is rounded at the front like the new XD-S models, rather than squared off like earlier XD versions.

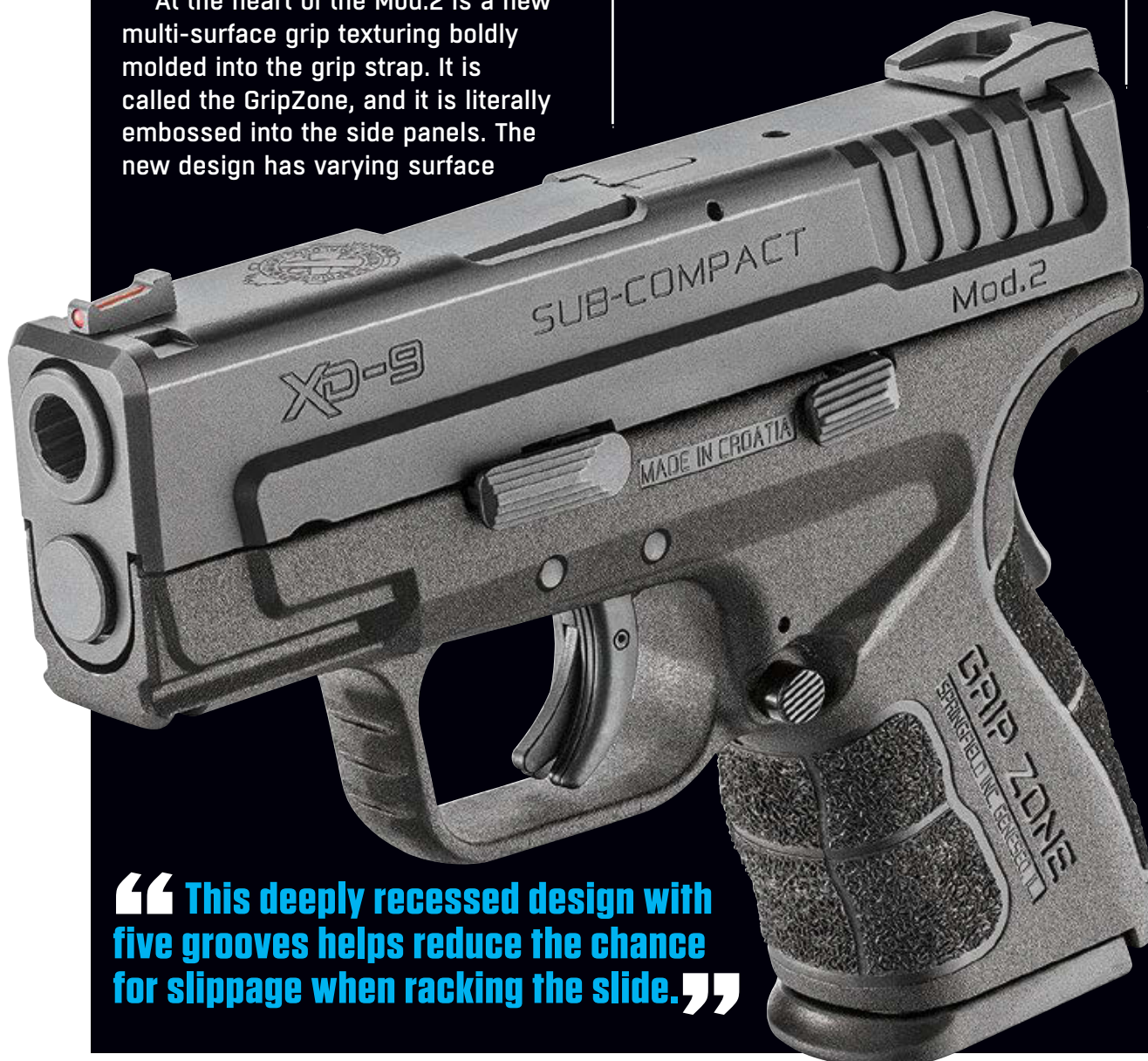
The new, more rounded and slightly narrower slide boasts several improvements, including new rear serrations, which Springfield calls the "Posi-Wedge Slide Serrations." This deeply recessed design with five grooves helps reduce the chance for slippage when racking the slide. The single most

important feature of the new slide design, however, comes from replacing the original white-dot sights with the latest XD-S' red fiber-optic front sight and combat-style white-dot rear. This combo on the Mod.2 makes the pistol faster to get on target under varying lighting conditions and extends the sight radius by 0.5 inches.

Tipping the scale at 26 ounces unloaded, the 9mm XD Mod.2 measures 6.25 inches in length, 4.75 inches in height from the base of the magazine to the top of the low-profile combat rear sight, and 1.19 inches in width. In short, it is a pretty small gun for a 14-round 9mm. Springfield also offers an extended-capacity magazine for the Mod.2 that adds another three rounds for a 16+1 capacity and a longer grip (with the magazine's X-Tension), which increases the height to 5.5 inches. There will also be Mod.2s chambered in .40 S&W and .45 ACP with 9+1 standard capacities and extended mags with 12+1 and 13+1 capacities, respectively.

With the XD's grip angle, high beavertail and grip safety working in concert with Springfield's Ultra Safety Assurance (USA) trigger safety, the Mod.2 takes nothing away from the previous XD Sub-Compact design but adds features that bring this established Springfield model up to par with the latest XD-S series. To see me wringing out the new 9mm Mod.2 on the range, visit personaldefenseworld.com.

—Dennis Adler



“This deeply recessed design with five grooves helps reduce the chance for slippage when racking the slide.”

SPEC BOX

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY XD MOD.2

CALIBER: 9mm, .40 S&W, .45 ACP

BARREL: 3-3.3 inches

OA LENGTH: 6.25-6.5 inches

WEIGHT: 26 ounces (empty)

GRIPS: Polymer

SIGHTS: Fiber-optic front, white-dot rear

ACTION: Striker-fired

FINISH: Matte black or bi-tone

CAPACITY: 13+1, 16+1 (9mm)

MSRP: \$549-\$616

SPEC BOX

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY XD-S 4.0

CALIBER: .45 ACP

BARREL: 4 inches

OA LENGTH: 6.87 inches

WEIGHT: 24 ounces (empty)

GRIPS: Polymer

SIGHTS: Fiber-optic front, white-dot rear

ACTION: Striker-fired

FINISH: Black frame, stainless slide

CAPACITY: 5+1, 6+1

MSRP: \$599-\$669

The 4-inch barrel has a 1-in-16-inch twist rate and an extremely hard and durable Melonite finish. And a nice feature of the XD line is the loaded-chamber indicator, which is a metal rod that is flush with the top of the slide until a round is chambered. At that point, the rod is pushed up, providing a visual and tactile indicator that a round is in the chamber.

The gun comes with two magazines, a short one that holds five rounds and another with a grip extension that holds six. For concealment, the short magazine may be the answer, but for shooting comfort and control, the longer magazine, which adds about an inch to the length of the grip, is better. In fact, the longer magazine makes firing the gun almost like firing a full-sized pistol. Making the XD-S 4.0 even more user friendly are two interchangeable backstraps to accommodate shooters with smaller or larger hands.

The slide catch and takedown levers were easy to manipulate, while the magazine release is truly ambidextrous and allowed magazines to drop freely when pressed with the thumb or the trigger finger. The trigger is equipped with Springfield's Ultra Safety Assurance (USA) trigger system that on the test gun broke at just over 7 pounds, which is within the 5.5- to 7.7-pound manufacturer's specifications.

Another nice feature of the XD-S is the grip safety. While some may dismiss it as unnecessary, it is very valuable, especially when holstering the gun. If the thumb is moved to the rear of the slide, thus releasing the grip safety, an unintentional discharge is less likely if the trigger is accidentally caught by clothing or the edge of the holster when reholstering the pistol.

ROUNDS DOWNRANGE

This gun is not a heavyweight, so shooting the .45 ACP cartridge is not going to be recoil free by any stretch of the imagi-

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3 DEEP-COVER SPRINGFIELDS



RANGE OFFICER COMPACT

Many who just love the 1911 can't be talked into using any other handgun, but they will consider a smaller version of Brownie's classic design. Now Springfield Armory has taken its successful full-sized Range Officer and shrunk it down to make the Range Officer Compact. Built with precision shooting in mind, it has a forged frame and slide as well as a National Match stainless steel bull barrel—all precision fit.

Springfield then tosses in a low-profile combat rear sight and a fiber-optic front sight for increased

SPEC BOX

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY RANGE OFFICER COMPACT

CALIBER: .45 ACP

BARREL: 4 inches

OA LENGTH: 7.6 inches

WEIGHT: 28.5 ounces (empty)

GRIPS: Cocobolo

SIGHTS: Fiber-optic front, low-profile rear

ACTION: SA

FINISH: Parkerized

CAPACITY: 6+1

MSRP: \$989



With a 6+1 capacity, the smaller, 4-inch-barreled Range Officer Compact still packs real firepower.

visibility and enhanced sight acquisition. The gun also comes with an extended beaver-tail grip safety, a flat mainspring housing and a beveled magazine well. Although the full-sized Range Officer was designed for competition, this compact, 4-inch-barreled 1911, with its six-round magazine, could be a good choice for officers looking for a dependable backup option, especially because it's chambered for the .45 ACP.

PERFORMANCE

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY XD-S 4.0

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY	
		Average	Best
Black Hills 230 JHP	821	1.61	1.48
Federal American Eagle 230 FMJ	841	1.57	1.26
Hornady 230 TAP FPD +P JHP	914	1.53	1.40

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 15 yards.

nation. While not punishing, it is more than one would encounter with the 9mm version of the gun. Nevertheless, the gun was comfortable to shoot and recoil was easily manageable—made more so no doubt by the added weight up front from the extra barrel length. Unlike most small guns, this one can be fired at the range during practice for longer periods



Springfield's new XD-S 4.0 handled well on the range.

because of the extended magazine and barrel length.

For those who believe that a 4-inch barrel is just the right length in a self-defense gun, Springfield Armory's new XD-S 4.0 in .45 ACP is a great choice that builds upon the XD line's reputation for quality. For more information, visit springfield-armory.com or call 800-680-6866. **TW**

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COBRA MARINE



TriStar's pump-action 12 gauge produces simple and reliable strikes for peacekeepers on the high seas!

BY LEROY THOMPSON PHOTOS BY STRAIGHT 8

The pump-action shotgun is well established as one of the best close-quarters defensive weapons in existence. Pump combat shotguns have proven especially popular with boat owners for keeping unwanted guests from boarding. Not only is the shotgun effective, but it is legal to have aboard the boat in areas where other types of weapons might be problematic.

As a result, an entire category of combat shotguns designated as "marine" models has been produced, usually with some type of hard chrome or brushed nickel finish. Not only does this finish enhance resistance to corrosion in the maritime environment, but it also makes the shotgun more visible and the bore looks larger for deterrence. The latter is a residual benefit. Additional corrosion resistance is offered by the chrome-lined chamber and bore.

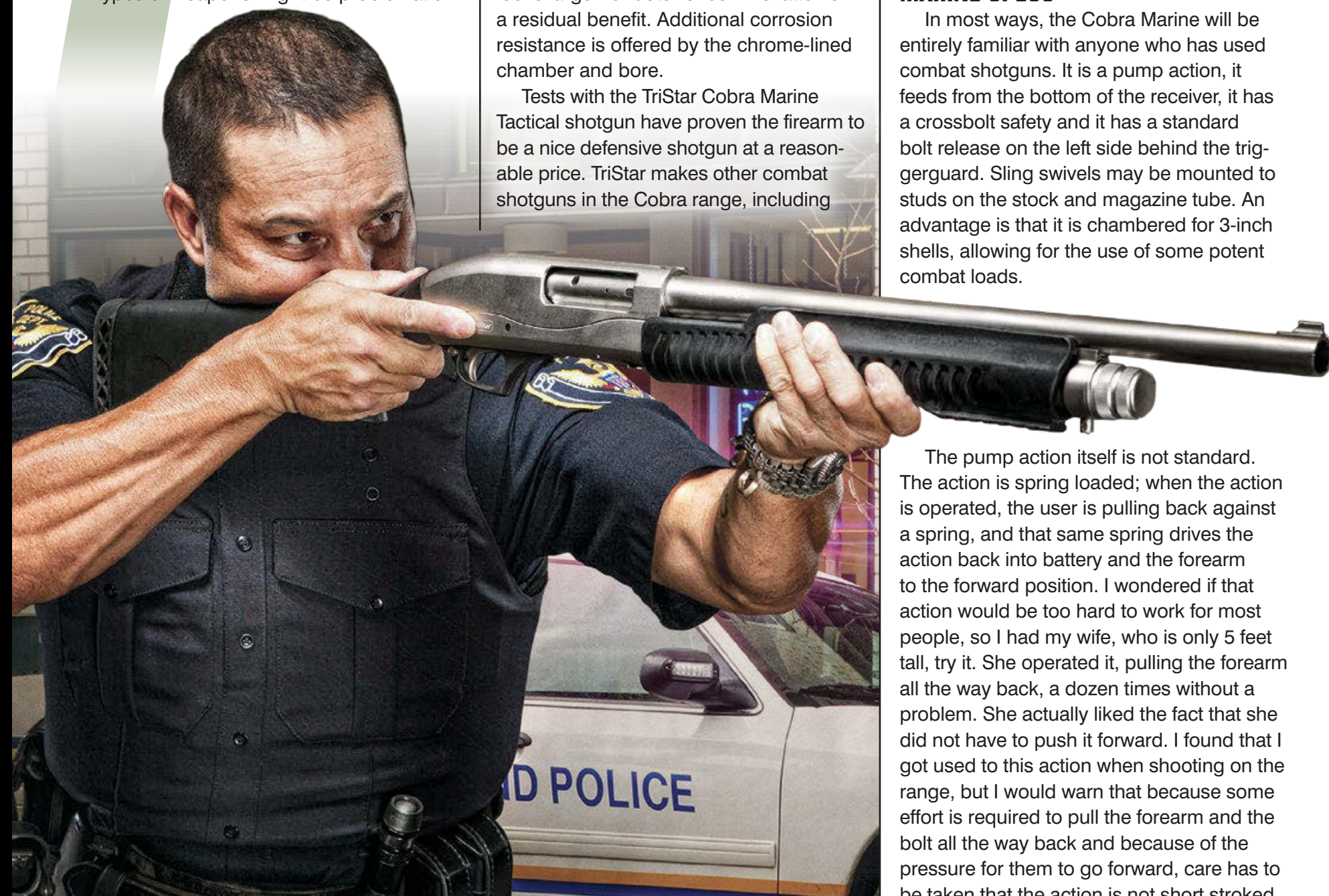
Tests with the TriStar Cobra Marine Tactical shotgun have proven the firearm to be a nice defensive shotgun at a reasonable price. TriStar makes other combat shotguns in the Cobra range, including

some with a pistol grip and a Picatinny rail. The Marine model, however, is a pretty standard pump action with a front sight that is more of a blade than a bead. I think that is as it should be for its mission: simple, reliable close-quarters combat capability in a salty, wet environment.

MARINE SPECS

In most ways, the Cobra Marine will be entirely familiar with anyone who has used combat shotguns. It is a pump action, it feeds from the bottom of the receiver, it has a crossbolt safety and it has a standard bolt release on the left side behind the triggerguard. Sling swivels may be mounted to studs on the stock and magazine tube. An advantage is that it is chambered for 3-inch shells, allowing for the use of some potent combat loads.

The pump action itself is not standard. The action is spring loaded; when the action is operated, the user is pulling back against a spring, and that same spring drives the action back into battery and the forearm to the forward position. I wondered if that action would be too hard to work for most people, so I had my wife, who is only 5 feet tall, try it. She operated it, pulling the forearm all the way back, a dozen times without a problem. She actually liked the fact that she did not have to push it forward. I found that I got used to this action when shooting on the range, but I would warn that because some effort is required to pull the forearm and the bolt all the way back and because of the pressure for them to go forward, care has to be taken that the action is not short stroked.



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* Some rifles may not be available in all states and locales due to laws limiting magazine capacity and feature-based restrictions.

Please check with your local law enforcement agency prior to purchasing this firearm to verify that it may legally be purchased and/or possessed in your particular state and locale.

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RUGER®



The shotgun's matte nickel finish protects the barrel and receiver from corrosion. Also note the simple front sight and the long, ribbed forend, which is spring-loaded for faster charging.

SPEC BOX

TRISTAR COBRA MARINE TACTICAL

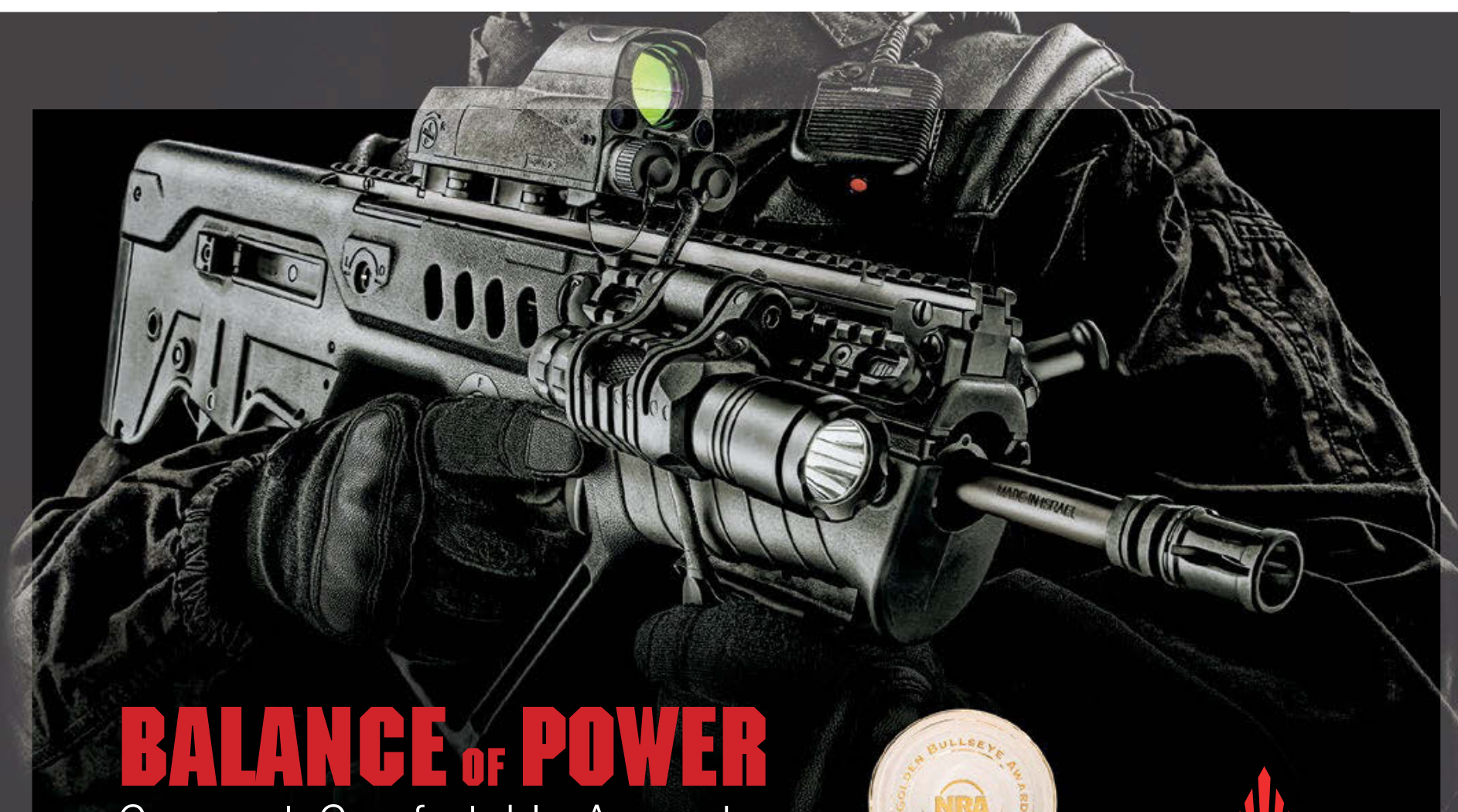
GAUGE:	12; 3-inch chamber
BARREL:	18.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	39 inches
WEIGHT:	6.2 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Synthetic
SIGHTS:	Front blade
ACTION:	Pump
FINISH:	Matte nickel
CAPACITY:	5+1
MSRP:	\$369

PERFORMANCE

When I shot the Cobra Marine Tactical on paper, the patterns were good. It is equipped with a Beretta choke system, but I'm not sure what choke was supplied. Based on its performance, I would assume it has a cylinder bore. At 15 yards, I tried Olin GI Overrun 2³/₄-inch 00 buckshot loads

and Winchester 2³/₄-inch Magnum #1 buckshot loads. With both, patterns were in the 7-by-8-inch range. At 25 yards, I used Federal 2³/₄-inch Magnum 00 buckshot loads, but only six of the 12 pellets stayed on the paper. I was shooting at various zombie targets.

I also fired a couple of magazines full of the GI 00 buckshot loads at hanging plates and pepper poppers between 15 and 35 yards to see how quickly I could move among targets. It would seem that the speed at which the forearm goes forward under the spring tension might speed follow-up shots, but the fact that I was concentrating on getting the forearm



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COMBAT SHOTGUN UPGRADES

1. TacStar's Shotgun Rail Mount: When a shotgun is sent to one of the custom shops that enhances combat shotguns, among the operations usually carried out are installing a ghost ring sight and adding a sidesaddle shell carrier. TacStar offers an inexpensive way to add both of these features with the Shotgun Rail Mount with Sidesaddle. Lightweight—only 13 ounces—and fabricated of aluminum, the Rail Mount straddles both sides of the shotgun's receiver for added rigidity. A ghost ring sight can be added to the rail or even a mini red dot, but the rail is low enough that a front bead sight may still be used on the shotgun. No gunsmithing is needed for installation, and everything

you will need is included in the package. Currently, the Shotgun Rail Mount with Sidesaddle is available for the Remington 870, 1100 and 11-87, as well as Mossberg's 12-gauge 500, 590 and Maverick 88 shotguns. That's a lot of shotguns that can be quickly upgraded with this kit. (800-225-9626; tacstar.com)

2. Mesa Tactical SureShell Carrier: Beretta 1301 fans have something to cheer about this year with Mesa Tactical's new shell carrier system offered in four-, six- and eight-shell configurations. The easy-to-mount unit is machined from aircraft-grade aluminum and features an integrated, receiver-length aluminum

Picatinny rail for mounting optics, lasers or other accessories. SureShell carriers are proven to withstand the daily use and abuse operators and shooting enthusiasts dish out, and they work well in all climates and environments.

Like all Mesa Tactical SureShell shotshell carriers, the new 1301 model is made from 6061-T6 aluminum that has been hardcoat anodized matte black and uses the company's innovative rubber friction retention system. This integrated shell carrier/optics mount system is securely attached to the receiver using the Beretta factory predrilled and tapped rail mount holes.

In addition to the Beretta 1301, SureShell shotshell carriers are available for a variety of shotguns, including Remington's 870, Versa Max, 1100 and 11-87; Mossberg's 500, 590 and 930; the FN SLP; the Kel-Tec KSG; and Benelli's M1, M2, M3, M4 and SuperNova. (714-545-3332; mesatactical.com)



The synthetic stock has a recoil-absorbing rubber buttpad.

all the way back might have slowed things a bit. Overall, I'd say that I did multiple engagements at least as fast as with a standard pump and maybe a bit faster. Definitely, the ribs on the forearm helped in fast manipulations. By the way, there is also a rail under the forearm to affix a

flashlight. The Cobra Marine Tactical's front sight is definitely better for target acquisition than the bead sight used on many combat shotguns.

I also fired a few 3-inch loads and found that the thick recoil pad on the Cobra Marine Tactical helped cushion recoil with those loads and the 2¾-inch Magnum loads I fired. In total, I fired about 100 rounds through the Cobra Marine Tactical. That gave me a good feel for the gun and left me with a very favorable impression. Carrying a price tag of \$369, I would rate it as a good defensive shotgun for anyone needing extra corrosion resistance. For more information, visit tristearms.com or call 816-421-1400. **TW**

PERFORMANCE

TRISTAR COBRA MARINE TACTICAL

BUCKSHOT	PATTERN
Federal Magnum 00 (12 pellets)	20.00*
Olin GI Overrun 00 (9 pellets)	10.80*
Winchester #1 (16 pellets)	10.63**
Buckshot pattern in inches at 15* and 25** yards.	

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.223 WYLDE IDAHO GEM

**SPOTLIGHT ON TODAY'S
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“LIBERTY BELLE” RIFLE!**



To honor Idaho's rich history and love of guns, MCM Firearms led several Idaho-based makers, including 2A Armament, PWS, Seekins and more to build this unique rifle.

“To be able to showcase this project—with everything it stands for and everyone involved—was a rare honor for the team at MCM Firearms.”

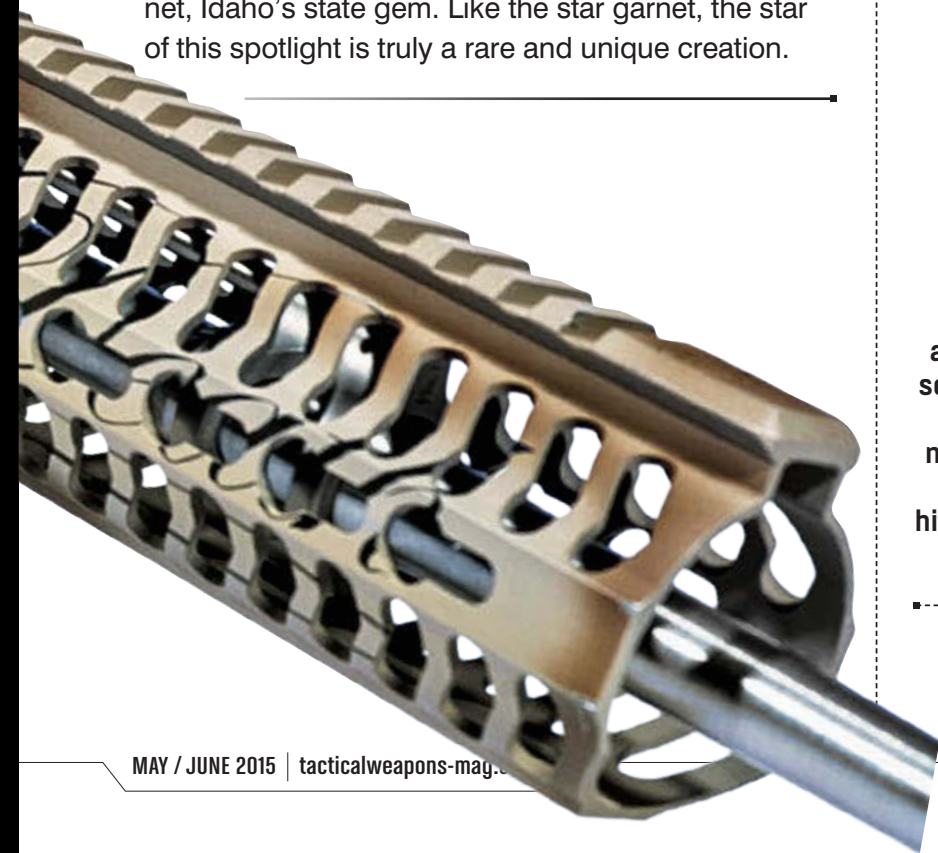


BY STEVE BELL
PHOTOS BY JOSH WOLFE

Partnerships. Like any relationship, they can run the spectrum from downright awful to great. The best ones create something known as synergy, when the final outcome results in something that, when taken as a whole, produces an enhanced effect that is greater than what the sum total of the individuals would be.

Synergy was the operative factor that contributed to a recently built AR-15, a one-of-a-kind gun with a standout visual appearance as well as second-to-none componentry. What makes this gun unique is how it went from inception to completion. The idea was to build the rifle using parts made by Idaho manufacturers, many known internationally for their fine craftsmanship. Idaho is nicknamed "The Gem State" because of its natural resources and scenic areas. Its mountains contain veins of gold, silver, lead, zinc, copper and more; its quarries produce precious stones such as jasper, opal and topaz. Among all this wealth of gems and minerals, one gem stands alone as a rare thing of beauty and strength: the star garnet, Idaho's state gem. Like the star garnet, the star of this spotlight is truly a rare and unique creation.

Weighing in at less than 7 pounds with a Gemtech suppressor and Leupold, this one-of-a-kind rifle not only looks great but is sure to be a hit with hunters and 3-Gunners alike.



.223 IDAHO RIFLE

In today's gun market, there are many variations of the AR-15, but they often look very similar. So, when the team at MCM Firearms in Nampa, Idaho, came up with the idea of a unique build, they decided to engage and showcase other Idaho-based companies—companies that share the same pride in quality craftsmanship that is a hallmark of every product MCM puts out. Professional relationships having already been forged with these companies, so obtaining their buy-in on a project like this was an easy sell. Work soon began towards the build of what the editors of *Tactical Weapons* magazine affectionately call the “Idaho Liberty Belle Rifle.”

CRYSTALLIZING

Because weight is a perennial concern when building a rifle like the AR-15, on this build the team at MCM Firearms started with the 2A Armament BALIOS-Lite billet upper and lower receivers. Features include a flared magazine well and an integrated and lightened triggerguard. They also used the T3 titanium compensator and titanium gas block from 2A Armament. The titanium gas block is 40-percent lighter

RIGHT: Benjamin Franklin's famous “Join or Die” snake, created in 1754 and considered the first American political cartoon printed, adorns the left side of the receiver.

BELOW: Let freedom ring! The rifle's left side sports Paul Revere and the Liberty Bell. Behind the .223 rifle is Idaho's Liberty Bell, one of 53 replicas made in France and given to states as part of a 1950 savings bond drive.



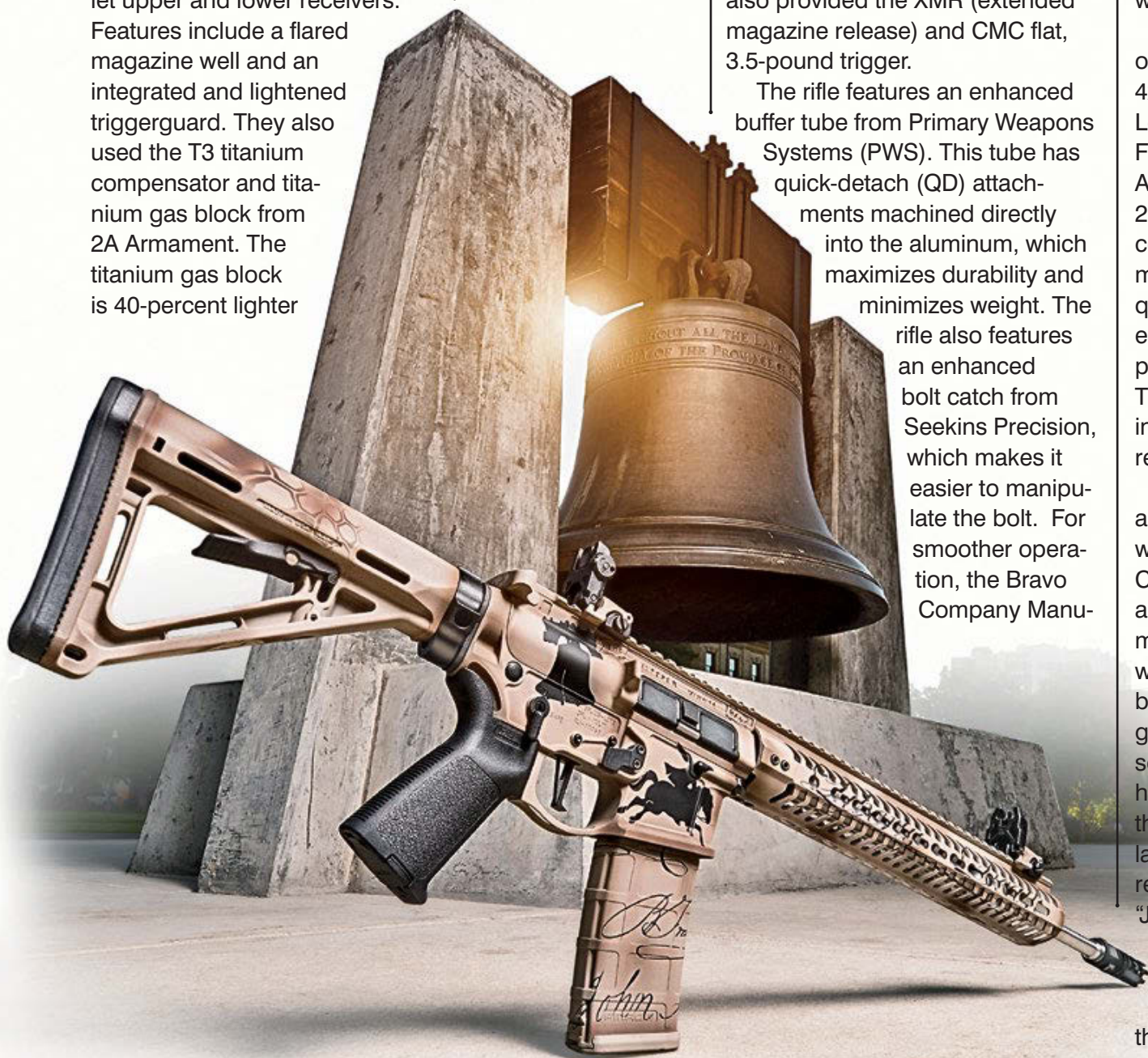
than standard steel gas blocks. The 16.1-inch-long ODIN Works Ultra-lite barrel is chambered in .223 Wylde with 1-in-8-inch-twist button rifling. The barrel is made from 416R stainless steel, and it's slim and lightweight at 1.41 pounds. Covering the mid-length gas system is a 12.5-inch KMod free-floating forend. ODIN Works also provided the XMR (extended magazine release) and CMC flat, 3.5-pound trigger.

The rifle features an enhanced buffer tube from Primary Weapons Systems (PWS). This tube has quick-detach (QD) attachments machined directly into the aluminum, which maximizes durability and minimizes weight. The rifle also features an enhanced bolt catch from Seekins Precision, which makes it easier to manipulate the bolt. For smoother operation, the Bravo Company Manu-

facturing (a Wisconsin company, but we had to go with the best in the business for that part) Gun-fighter Mod 4 charging handle was used for this build. The ambidextrous safety selector comes from CMMG (a top-notch company out of Missouri). To keep a clean look, the team at MCM Firearms chose a Magpul MOE carbine stock and as well as an MOE grip.

When the time came to select optics, Gemtech supplied the 1.25-4x20mm VX-R Patrol scope from Leupold. The scope features the FireDot special-purpose reticle. A 30mm cantilever mount with a 2-inch offset from Vortex allows for correct eye relief and head placement on the AR-15 platform. To quiet things down, the rifle can be equipped with the TREK-T suppressor, again from Gemtech. The TREK-T is made of titanium, weighs in at 10.3 ounces and has a sound reduction of 29 decibels.

At this point the rifle was clearly an exclusive build. The last step was to design and apply a custom Cerakote job. To give the rifle the appearance of a timeworn document, Kryptek's Nomad pattern was the obvious choice for the buttstock and suppressor. The goal was twofold: to pay tribute to some key historical figures who had established the freedoms of this country, and to feature some lasting patriotic images. Thus, the receivers feature Ben Franklin's “Join or Die,” an image of the Liberty Bell, Paul Revere on horseback and the Culpeper Minute-men banner. The forend bears the insignias “1776” and “Liberty



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.223 IDAHO RIFLE

or Death,” and the Magpul PMAG showcases the signatures of John Hancock, Ben Franklin and John Adams from the Declaration of Independence. Finally, as a memorial to the gun’s home state, the year Idaho was admitted to the Union as the 43rd state—1890—is Cerakoted onto the back of the charging handle.

TO THE STATE CAPITOL

Job done. Well, not quite. Team MCM wanted to capture, through the camera lens, the spirit of this exclusive gun. It was the consensus that Idaho’s State Capitol Building in Boise offered the best backdrop, in keeping with the themes of patriotism and where the rifle was built. But, in order to accomplish this, the team soon realized that they would have to gain the cooperation of several layers of law enforcement. Their first contact proved to be the lynchpin; the Idaho State Police (ISP) came through to coordinate capitol grounds security personnel and Boise Police Department officers in obtaining approval and security to schedule a photo shoot on the steps of Idaho’s State Capitol Building. The “all clear” assured there would be no SWAT teams dropping out of the sky into the middle of the photo shoot! To the contrary, literally everyone involved in making the photo shoot safe and legal had the same reaction to the project: “What an awesome idea!”

From the steps of the capitol, the MCM team had double the fun: posing the gun for the photo shoot and acknowledging passing motorists who honked and waved their approval in the capital city of this open-carry state.

Now it was time to test the rifle. It was a typical winter’s day in Idaho with rain and snow, 30-degree temperatures and a 10-mph breeze. Team MCM tested the rifle with Black Hills’ 77-grain Open-Tip Match ammunition, and the results exceeded all expectations.

The Idaho Rifle has been well received by the firearms community. Recently, ODIN Works displayed it as a featured gun in its booth at a 2015 gun show



Cerakoted onto the back of the BCM Gunfighter Mod 4 charging handle is “1890,” the year Idaho became the 43rd state admitted to the Union.

SPEC BOX

IDAHO RIFLE

CALIBER: .223 Wylde

BARREL: 16.1 inches

OA LENGTH: 33.5-37 inches

WEIGHT: 6.8 pounds (empty)

STOCK: Magpul MOE

SIGHTS: Leupold VX-R Patrol

ACTION: Direct Impingement semi-auto

FINISH: Custom Cerakote

CAPACITY: 30+1

MSRP: N/A

in Las Vegas, where it garnered a fair amount of attention. Now privately owned by MCM Firearms, it’s on display at the company’s headquarters in Nampa, Idaho. All companies involved with the build have access to the rifle for social media and marketing purposes.

This project reinforces why living in Idaho is such a privilege. To be able to showcase this project—with everything it stands for and everyone involved—was a rare honor for the team at MCM Firearms. We stand proudly beside our other Idaho-based partners as we present the AR-platform Idaho Rifle.

INFO BOX

2A ARMAMENT
2a-arms.com; 208-344-5465

CMC TRIGGERS
cmctriggers.com; 817-563-6611

GEMTECH
gem-tech.com; 208-939-7222

KRYPTTEK OUTDOOR GROUP
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mcmfirearms.com; 208-284-4883

ODIN WORKS
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SIG TAC2

**The Transformer-like
takedown 7.62
DRIVEN TO DOMINATE
WAY DOWNRANGE!**

>>> BY ANDY MASSIMILIAN

**“It has a very rapid
straight-pull action
and added features
that make it one of the
more flexible platforms
available.”**

Though the recent focus in the arena of law enforcement rifles has been on a patrol rifle for each squad car and using ARs instead of 9mm submachine guns on entry teams, bolt-action sniper rifles will always have a leading role on tactical teams. Sig Sauer offers three tactical bolt-action rifles—the SIG50, the SSG 3000 and the TAC2—to cover a wide range of mission profiles.

Of the three, the TAC2 is unquestionably the most mission and operator flexible for several reasons. The rifle is easy to assemble and take down, and users can change barrels and calibers without special tools or a change in zero. The rifle also has a highly configurable stock and can be operated from the left- or right-hand side. Moreover, the TAC2 is the only Sig Sauer straight-pull bolt action (and it's one of only a few made anywhere). Blaser, a sister company of Sig Sauer, makes the TAC2 in Germany. Two chamberings are currently being imported—7.62mm NATO and .338 Lapua Magnum—the former of which I recently tested.

SIG TAC2



SIG SAUER TAC2 DETAILS

- 1 Height-adjustable recoil pad
- 2 Adjustable cheekpiece
- 3 Blaser-engineered straight-pull bolt action
- 4 Picatinny rail for optics
- 5 Cold-hammer forged, fluted, match-grade, free-floating barrel
- 6 18x1 threaded muzzle, capped for optional muzzle brake
- 7 Hardcoat anodized receiver
- 8 Aircraft-grade aluminum billet receiver
- 9 Side-mounted magazine releases and five-round magazine
- 10 Adjustable single-stage trigger
- 11 Injection-molded composite stock (as tested by author)

STRAIGHT TALK

Straight-pull actions are typically faster than conventional bolt-action designs because the operator cycles the action with only forward-rearward movement. Straight-pull actions also tend to keep the rifle aligned with the target because there is no tendency to lift the rifle upward, off the bipod, as do rifles that cock the striker while rotating the bolt open.

The TAC2's straight-pull design has unusual mechanics. The lockup between the bolt and barrel is not conventional, where locking lugs on the bolt rotate into recesses in the barrel extension or receiver. With this rifle, lockup is accomplished by the expansion of a 360-degree collet that surrounds the bolt. The collet has 14 "fingers" just behind the front of the bolt that center themselves and expand outward when the bolt is moved to its forward-most position. These fingers fit into a circular recess in the barrel extension. Pulling the bolt handle rearward unlocks the action by retracting the collet fingers inward, towards the center axis of the bolt. Unlike most straight-pulls, there is no radial movement of any parts or shearing action in locking or

unlocking the bolt. This makes the action cycle with much less force applied to the bolt handle.

Careful engineering is also demonstrated in the ambidextrous safety, which is mounted directly on the rear of the bolt. Applying it decocks the striker and locks the firing pin away from the primer, making the TAC2 completely drop safe and safer to carry with a loaded chamber than many other designs.

The stock and receiver can support multiple calibers that can be changed in the field. All that is needed is a different barrel and magazine, and, depending on the caliber you wish to change to, a different bolt head. Because the collect is self-headspacing, barrels can be installed or changed in the field without gauges. Attaching a barrel is simply a matter of placing it into the bed of the receiver and using the supplied Allen-head wrench to tighten two screws. No torque wrench is required. Changing calibers is slightly more complex and requires changing the bolt head (all that's needed is your fingernail or knife to unlock it) if you switch to a caliber outside a one of four caliber groups: "Mini" for 5.56mm NATO, "Standard" for 7.62mm NATO, "Magnum" for .300 Winchester Magnum, and "Lapua" for .338 Lapua.

The TAC2 can be taken down in less than two minutes into the barrel (24.7 inches long) and stock (27.63 inches with the quick-detach buttplate removed). Thus, the rifle, bipod and suppressor can conceivably fit into a case 30 inches long and 12 inches tall. That's about the length of a 20-inch-barreled, 7.62mm AR separated at the receiver with its stock collapsed.

Rifles with quick-change barrels generally tend to have a problem with maintaining a precise zero once the barrel is

Sig Sauer offers padded rifle bags made of nylon for carrying your rifle, scope, ammunition, magazines and even handguns.



4

5

6

7

The TAC2's stock has four sockets for quick-detach sling swivels, and users can quickly attach a bipod (not included), for enhanced stability and precision.

removed. But that's not the case with the Sig Sauer TAC2 because the scope is mounted to a Picatinny rail attached to the barrel, not the receiver.

The receiver is made from aircraft-grade aluminum that has been hardcoat anodized, while the recoil lug is made of hardened steel. The TAC2 has a 24.7-inch, cold-hammer-forged barrel with four-groove, 1-in-11-inch-twist rifling. The barrel has 10 longitudinal flutes to reduce weight, features 18x1 threading for mounting a suppressor or muzzle brake and comes with a thread protector. Sig Sauer offers an optional six-chamber muzzle brake. The barrel is coated with a nitride finish

SPEC BOX

SIG SAUER TAC2

CALIBER: 7.62mm NATO

BARREL: 24.7 inches

OA LENGTH: 44.5 inches

WEIGHT: 11.9 pounds (empty)

STOCK: Injection-molded composite

SIGHTS: None

ACTION: Bolt

FINISH: Matte black

CAPACITY: 5+1

MSRP: \$4,171



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The TAC2 was truly made to go the distance. While the 7.62mm NATO can hit the 1,000-yard targets shown, users can easily convert the rifle to .338 Lapua for greater accuracy at this range.



tapered to allow for quick vertical positioning by sliding the rifle forward or rearward when rested on sandbags. It also has a recessed steel rail for mounting a bipod or sling. The stock's grip can be used for support because it has a wide flat bottom that adds stability when placed against a surface below the rifle. Its height is adjustable by a half-inch using two spacers. For supporting the rifle at the rear, there's a mounting point for a monopod. Finally, the stock has a hook under the rear where you can use your support hand to press the rifle into your shoulder.

The stock has four sockets for QD sling swivels (two 0.75-inch-wide swivels are supplied). The QD sockets allow the swivels to be set at 90-degree positions that put the sling in a fixed position, which works far better than sockets that allow the swivels to turn freely.

Aside from a stock that fits the shooter, an important consideration for precision marksmanship is trigger finger placement. The TAC2 has a single-stage trigger that can be adjusted by the user without removing the action from the stock. The trigger blade is relatively wide, smooth and curved. Users can adjust the trigger's position (forward or rearward), pull weight and

inside and out for corrosion and abrasion resistance. I actually saw this finish's durability put to the test at the Sig Sauer Academy when instructor Scott Kennelson proceeded to rake a knife's blade across the barrel of a TAC2 several times without leaving any visible marks.

The TAC2 is adaptable to different riflemen. It comes standard with a right-side bolt handle and right-side ejection. However, with optional parts, it can be configured with the bolt handle on the left side and ejection towards either side. My preference as a right-handed shooter is for right-side ejection with a left-side bolt handle. This makes multiple-shot engagements when firing from a supported position far more rapid because the operator's firing hand remains properly positioned on the rifle while the support hand runs the bolt.

The TAC2 uses a sturdy, single-column, five-round, detachable box magazine. The shell is polymer, and a stainless steel insert that functions both as the retaining lips and as a guide for the follower extends into the magazine surrounding the cartridges. The magazine drops free into your palm by pushing two release buttons located on both sides of the stock.

STOCK OPTIONS

The injection-molded composite stock offers multiple adjustments to help fit the rifle to each shooter. A proper fit allows the shooter to quickly mount the rifle with their dominant eye centered behind the scope with the correct eye relief. To facilitate this fit, the rear stock is adjustable for buttplate height, length of pull, cheekpiece height and cheekpiece offset. A thumbwheel

adjusts the buttplate up or down. The buttplate also has four 0.38-inch spacers that can be removed to adjust the length of pull, which helps establish correct eye relief. Finally, the cheekpiece is adjustable for height and offset from the comb.

The forend has a flat bottom and is



1,000-YARD TRAINING DAY

ONE THING BECAME CLEAR early on in my testing of the TAC2: This rifle is so accurate that shooting at 100 yards was not a challenge, nor did it test my ability or that of the ammo/rifle combination. Clearly, the TAC2 was made to shoot at distances of 400 to 800 yards and beyond.

For shooting at these ranges, I attended Sig Sauer Academy's "Reach for a Thousand" class held at its Exeter, New Hampshire, complex. Lasting about six hours, Reach for a Thousand is not an in-depth instructional course on long-distance rifle shooting but an opportunity to test your equipment or borrow a Sig Sauer rifle equipped with a Leupold scope and shoot out to 1,000 yards. (For in-depth instruction, the Academy offers basic to advanced precision rifle courses that are two to five days long.)

The Academy offers the only civilian-available range in New England with distances of over 600 yards, according to instructor Scott Kenneson, so 800- and 1,000-yard shooting is a first-time experience for many people who attend.

Though essentially a range day with

some coaching on firing from the supported prone position, Reach for 1,000 briefly covers relevant topics such as shooting uphill/downhill, the effect of cold versus warm air on a bullet's flight, the meaning of MOA and mils, the need to keep a data book on each round fired, and testing your scope for adjustment precision and accuracy by "shooting the box." Almost all the time is spent practicing your skills on the firing line.

BOX OUT: Shooting the box is an essential exercise for long-distance shooters who need a scope that gives repeatable adjustments that are correctly calibrated in MOA or inches. It can be accomplished by shooting a minimum of five shots: one "sighter" and then four more that are intended to form the corners of a square box on a paper target. Here's how it is done. Fire a single sighter on a blank paper target, then adjust the scope a given MOA to the right. Shot two is taken using the first round's strike mark on the target as the aiming point. The scope is then adjusted downward the same MOA for the third shot, again

PERFORMANCE

SIG SAUER TAC2

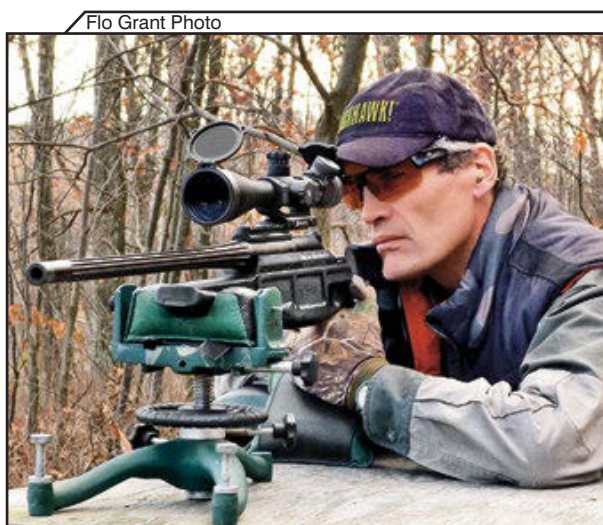
LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY	
		Average	Best
Black Hills 175 HPBT	2,612	0.75	0.56
Brand A 175 HPBT	2,581	0.93	0.75
Hornady 168 A-MAX	2,680	0.77	0.38

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

overtravel. The minimum pull weight is 2.2 pounds. I tested the TAC2 with a pull weight at just over 3 pounds. The trigger breaks very cleanly with no take-up, minimal movement during the break and no overtravel.

RANGE WRINGOUT

I tested the 7.62mm TAC2 at 100 yards using a Leupold 8.5-25x50mm Mark 4 scope and a Caldwell BR rest with a sandbag positioned under the grip. The smallest five-shot groups, measured from the centers of the shots, were 0.38 inches (Hornady 168-grain A-MAX), 0.56 inches (Black Hills 175-grain HPBT) and 0.75 inches (Brand A 147-grain HPBT). The mean



Flo Grant Photo

group size for every load was under 1 inch. Noteworthy were several groups shot using the Hornady load where four of the five shots touched to make 0.5- to 0.63-inch groups with a fifth flyer widening the group. A few of these flyers were operator error and sometimes caused by the pulse in my cheek transmitted to the rifle. This was evident thanks to the power and clarity of the Leupold scope, which made detection of even the slightest movement apparent. If we remove my pulse from the equation, the TAC2 likely groups under 0.75 inches all day long with the Hornady 168-grain A-MAX ammo. Given the 1-in-11-inch-twist barrel, however, the TAC2 may perform

The TAC2's stock, with its adjustable buttpad and cheekpiece, makes it easy to shoot the rifle accurately from benchrest and prone positions.

better with 158-grain loads, which were not available at the time of testing.

The TAC2 functioned perfectly, and the straight-pull action lessened recovery time between shots, as did the tapered forend, which allowed me to push the rifle forward on the sandbag and reestablish the correct elevation. Perceived recoil is minimal.

There are several highly accurate bolt-action tactical rifles made on a production scale. Only a few, however, are takedown rifles with quick-change barrels. The TAC2 is one of them, but it has a very rapid straight-pull action and added features that make it one of the more flexible platforms available. For more information, call 603-610-3000 or visit sigsauer.com. **TW**

EDITOR'S NOTE: As this article went to press, TW editors learned that TAC2s are no longer being imported from Germany, but you can find them at gunsamerica.com, gunbroker.com and select firearms retailers. To find a Sig Sauer retailer near you, visit sigsauer.com/dealerlocator.



The Sig Sauer Academy's "Reach for a Thousand" class makes it easy for you to test your equipment, or one of Sig Sauer's rifles, out to 1,000 yards.

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and could cite a few interesting statistics, such as the maximum ordinate for a 1,000-yard zero on a .308 Winchester round is 42 to 45 feet and the bullet is in flight almost two seconds. You can easily imagine the scenarios where such data is useful: shooting under a canopy of trees could interfere with the trajectory of the bullet or engaging a moving target that would require a positive lead to hit it.

DOWN & DIRTY: All shooting is done prone, so make sure to bring a good shooting matt and, if you have one, a spotting scope. As expected, all rifles were bolt actions and most were in .308 Winchester Win, though one shooter had a Savage 110 BA in .338 Lapua. The Sig Sauer TAC2 rifles supplied to students who requested them were equipped with Leupold scopes and Harris bipods. The SSG 3000 and Blaser LRS are also available for use. For more, call 603-610-3400 or visit sigsaueracademy.com.

using the bullet hole of the preceding shot as the aiming point. After the third shot, move the scope to the left for the fourth shot, then finally upward for the final shot, again adjusting the scope the same amount. The final shot should be very close or touching the first sighting sound. Retrieve the target and measure the distances between each shot that

form the corners of the box. They should match the MOA adjustment you used.

TECH TALK: My targets were paper and steel at 100, 200 and 300 yards, then chest-sized steel plates at 800 and 1,000 yards. Kenneson had the Applied Ballistics app (available on the Apple App and Google Play stores for \$30) on his PDA

ROLLING THUNDER



Bulletproof Humvees and APCs carry the Tucson PD fire to the fight!

BY NICK JACOBELLIS PHOTOS BY ALEX LANDEEN

After every war since World War II, law enforcement agencies have benefited in some way from the use of military-surplus equipment. Some of the most popular military-surplus items in the post-WWII years were M1 Carbines and submachine guns. The Vietnam War provided law enforcement agencies with M16s and M113 armored personnel carriers (APCs). During the end of the Cold War, numerous Cadillac Gage Peacekeeper armored trucks

ended up in the hands of law enforcement SWAT teams. Today is no different.

In this installment of *Tactical Rides* we will be discussing the use of military-surplus High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs, or simply "Humvees") and the M113 APC by law enforcement agencies in the U.S., as well as The Armored Group's newly manufactured Ballistic Armored Tactical Transport (BATT) XL armored vehicle.

HUMVEE LIFE CYCLE

The Humvee is a tactical ride that has gone through numerous phases and modifications since this military vehicle first arrived on the scene in the mid-1980s. Ever since Operation Just Cause in Panama in 1989, various versions of the Humvee have served in every major combat action involving the U.S. and various coalition and NATO allies, including in the First Gulf War, Somalia, the Balkans as well as in the Global War on Terror.

Even though the Humvee was originally designed to serve as a light utility vehicle, the day came when the needs of the U.S. armed forces demanded that certain modifications be made that enabled Humvees to serve in frontline combat. Once these modifications were made, the Humvee transitioned from serving as a light utility vehicle to a light armored vehicle. Unfor-

The Tucson, Arizona, Police Department SWAT team chose The Armored Group's bulletproof BATT XL vehicle to safely carry and protect personnel during operations.

Unfortunately, once the U.S. became involved in the Global War on Terror, lightly armored Humvees were insufficient in meeting the demands of ongoing combat operations. This became a very serious problem when U.S. and coalition/NATO troops became embroiled in a violent insurgency conflict and large numbers of Humvees were being used on a daily basis to conduct missions in combat zones that they were not originally designed to perform.

Even though a concoction of “hillbilly armor” and factory-manufactured armored kits improved the survivability of a Humvee crew, the vehicle was still susceptible to being destroyed by heavy weapons, including improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and explosively formed penetrators (EFPs). As different variants were produced, the original Humvee turned into a heavily armed, up-armored tactical ride that weighed a lot more than the original model and also proved to be difficult to operate in certain conditions.

As the U.S. began to withdraw from certain Global War on Terror combat operations, the Department of Defense once again began to offer military-surplus equipment to civilian law enforcement agencies, including unarmored and up-armored Humvees. Even though the Humvee displayed certain shortcomings in frontline military service, the Humvee still distinguished itself enough to become a sought-after tactical ride for civilian law enforcement agencies to acquire for use in special applications.

Due to the high price of tactical vehicles, including a wide variety of unarmored and armored 4x4 SUVs and trucks, a number of law enforcement agencies are putting surplus unarmored and up-armored Humvees to work as SWAT vehicles, off-road rescue vehicles and remote-area patrol vehicles. Because law enforcement agencies are obtaining these vehicles free of charge except for the cost of applying new paint (when required), installing LE equipment and providing necessary maintenance, a law enforcement agency can field a rugged, proven tactical ride that can continue to serve for years to come without having to incur the cost of buying a brand new vehicle.

The surplus Humvee shown here with a subdued black finish is currently in service with the Tucson Police Department (TPD) SWAT team. In addition to being used to transport Tucson SWAT personnel into a hot zone or a high-threat area, the up-armored Humvee can also be used to

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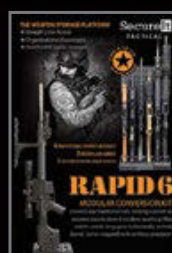
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SPECIFICATIONS

	ARMORED GROUP BATT XL	HMMWV	M113/M113A1
LENGTH:	26.5 feet	16.17 feet	15.96 feet
WIDTH:	8.83 feet	7.25 feet	8.12 feet
HEIGHT:	11.25 feet	6.35 feet	8.19 feet
WEIGHT:	35,060 pounds	7,230 pounds	24,600 pounds
WHEELBASE:	12.67 feet	10.8 feet	N/A
FRAME:	Heat-treated alloy steel	Steel	Steel and aluminum
TOW CAPACITY:	16,000 pounds	4,200 pounds	16,000 pounds
FUEL CAPACITY:	80 gallons	25 gallons	95 gallons
ENGINE:	6.80-liter V10 gas, or 6.7-liter turbo diesel	V8 6.5-liter diesel	6-cylinder Detroit diesel
HORSEPOWER:	310	190	212
GROUND CLEARANCE:	12-13 inches	18.2 inches	16.1 inches

recover casualties under fire while also serving as armored cover during certain tactical operations.

The Humvee has a three-speed 4x4 transmission, run-flat tires, a high ground clearance and can be easily equipped with a water-fording system, making it an ideal vehicle to use when law enforcement officers need to travel through debris fields, flooded areas, deep snow and rugged terrain. As far as law enforcement applications are concerned, the original 6.2- and the 6.5-liter V8 diesel engines are dependable power plants, especially when a Humvee is being operated in extreme weather conditions and in higher elevations.

M113 APC

During the Vietnam War, the M113A1 APC became the warhorse that carried fully armed troops, weapons and large amounts of equipment and supplies directly into combat. Once again, a vehicle that was designed to transport troops to the front lines ended up being used in direct combat actions.

Regardless of the difficulty of operating in different types of terrain, large numbers of diesel-powered

M113 APCs were driven into harm's way on a daily basis in Vietnam. An even more effective

Many LE agencies, such as the Tucson Police Department, use military-surplus vehicles like Humvees to support tactical operations.



Long before Humvees and MRAPs became available, LE SWAT teams used older military-surplus vehicles, such as the M113 APC in the Tucson SWAT team's arsenal.



“ The Tucson Police Department uses its BATT XL to transport and insert a large contingent of tactical operators into a high-threat area...”

M113 variant was known as the Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicle (ACAV). M113 ACAVs were equipped with one protected, turret-mounted M2 .50 machine gun; two protected, turret-mounted M60 machine guns; and additional armor plating.

Eventually, the M113 became another military-surplus vehicle that a number of civilian law enforcement agencies acquired for special applications. The TPD in Southern Arizona has used its pair of M113s, with their distinctive, LE-style black and white paint schemes, in a number of SWAT operations. Today, the pair of Tucson SWAT team M113s are held in reserve now that this incredibly active tactical team has acquired an up-armored Humvee and a BATT XL tactical ride from The Armored Group.

BATT-ER UP!

During the Global War on Terror, civilian law enforcement agencies began purchasing modern armored vehicles for use by their tactical teams. These vehicles are manufactured to meet the needs and specifications of each end-user. Companies like The Armored Group manufacture tactical vehicles of various sizes that can include a roof-mounted turret, drive trains to handle any terrain and various levels of bulletproof armor protection.

The Tucson SWAT team operates The Armored Group's BATT XL tactical ride featured in this article. The Tucson Police Department uses its BATT XL to transport and insert a large contingent of tactical operators into a high-threat area in a ballistically protected and temperature-controlled environment. In addition, the top turret on the BATT XL is used as an elevated observation position as well as an elevated firing platform for a TPD SWAT sniper. Last but not least, the BATT XL is also used as a fixed or mobile armored platform for TPD SWAT personnel to take cover behind and conduct rescues under fire. For more information, visit armoredcars.com or call 602-840-2271. 



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BY DAVID MACCAR



1 BLACKHAWK STORM SLING

HARNESSTHE POWER



When it counts, a user's primary weapon has to be utterly reliable. But if it can't be easily accessed, or if it gets in the way when both hands are required, it isn't as effective in the field as it should be.

The myriad options available out there to sling your weapon are a mind-bending jungle of nylon straps, clips, swivels and attachment points. Obviously, the type of weapon and the duty it will serve are the primary considerations. Then it's time to find a sling that matches. For some, a classic two-point sling will do. For others who have to

spend long hours on foot with a weapon ready, a harness system is a better fit. But there's a lot of middle ground as well as a need for versatility. Here are some new slings and harnesses for ARs, carbines, submachine guns and shotguns that are solidly built and serve a variety of functions in the field.

1 BLACKHAWK STORM SLING

This unique single-point sling is constructed of high-strength, 1.25-inch-wide nylon webbing with an elliptical bungee for comfort and support. The bungee allows for up to 4 inches of flex for

weapon agility and CQB tactics. The sling adjusts from 46 inches to 64 inches in diameter to fit a wide variety of body sizes and around body armor and tactical vests. An elastic-encased MASH clip gives quick, positive firearm attachment. The heavy-duty triglide buckle, metal oval ring and single, 300-pound-test, side-release buckle allow for quick sling attachment and removal. Its MSRP is \$34. (blackhawk.com; 800-694-5263)

2 BLUE FORCE GEAR SOC-C SLING

If a user's loadout constantly changes based on the mission at hand, the SOC-C is a perfect sling choice. It converts easily to single-, two- and three-point configurations without changing hardware or removing the sling from the user's body. Made of 1.25-inch, Invista-solution-dyed Cordura webbing, the sling is available with HK hooks and push buttons and converts using machined-aluminum triglides. It also features a dynamic adjuster, making it a truly all-purpose sling. It's available in black, coyote brown, foliage green and MultiCam. The SOC-C's MSRP is \$68. (blueforcegear.com; 877-430-2583)



2 BLUE FORCE GEAR SOC-C SLING

BCM GUN FIGHTER™



BCMGUNFIGHTER™ Pistol Grip

- Reduced grip angle keeps wrist in line for improved trigger control
- Hinged Trap Door interior storage with water resistant rubber gasket
- Mod 0 similar to A1/A2 backstrap, Mod 1 with high rise backstrap
- Mod 2 up to 1/4 inch wider with interchangeable backstraps/inserts
- Mod 3 up to 1/4 inch wider with high rise backstrap/extended insert
- All Mods available in Black, Flat Dark Earth, Foliage Green, Wolf Gray

BCMGUNFIGHTER Pistol Grips Prices start at \$17.95



BCMGUNFIGHTER™ Stock

Over a year in design, specifically engineered geometry, with no weak links. New patent pending latch reinvents the interface with the receiver extension, providing superior strength.

- Simple modular, snag free design utilizes only 5 parts and 1 screw
- 2 ambidextrous sling mounting options including QD swivel socket
- Color matched rubber buttpad for secure shoulder placement
- Available in Black, Flat Dark Earth, Foliage Green and Wolf Gray

BCMGUNFIGHTER Stock \$55.95



BCMGUNFIGHTER™ Vertical Grip

- Forward angle increases rigidity of the forearm, provides more natural wrist angle
- Featuring an aggressive texture, and generous storage volume
- Cross bolt designed to work with improvised tools
- Reversible clamp for fastener setup on either side
- Made in the U.S.A. from high quality, impact resistant polymers
- Available in Black, Flat Dark Earth, Foliage Green and Wolf Gray

BCMGUNFIGHTER VG - Screw Mount \$39.95



BCMGUNFIGHTER™ Vertical Grip - Short

- Low-profile length for increased mobility and decreased "snag" factor
- Forward angle increases rigidity of the forearm, provides more natural wrist angle
- Aggressive texture, generous storage volume
- Made in the U.S.A. from high quality, impact resistant polymers
- Available in Black, Flat Dark Earth, Foliage Green and Wolf Gray

BCMGUNFIGHTER VG-S - Short, Screw Mount Version \$35.95

BCMGUNFIGHTER VG-S-KM - Short, KeyMod Version \$39.95



BCMGUNFIGHTER™ VG

- Low-profile length for increased mobility and decreased "snag" factor
- The forward angle increases the rigidity of the forearm, while providing a more natural wrist angle
- Can be mounted in reverse angle to increase control when grabbing handguard and grip
- Flat sides with aggressive texture give better control to the shooter
- Anchor and bolt system offers a simple robust design, while maintaining a light-weight 1.9 ounces
- Made in the U.S.A. from high quality, impact resistant polymers
- Available in Black, Flat Dark Earth, Foliage Green and Wolf Gray

BCMGUNFIGHTER VG-KM-MOD-3 - KeyMod Version \$18.95

BCMGUNFIGHTER VG-1913-MOD-3 - Picatinny Rail Version . . \$19.95



BCMGUNFIGHTER™ KAG Kinesthetic Angled Grip

- Forward rake gives positive retention when using "C-clamp" method of handguard support, works as a rest for supported firing positions
- Slight angle without bulk adds just the right amount of strain relief to the wrist without substantially increasing the girth of the handguard
- Small profile, textured front and back for positive engagement
- Innovative patent pending attachment method allows for robust clamping and alignment with minimal hardware and accessory size
- Made in the U.S.A. from high quality, impact resistant polymers
- Available in Black, Flat Dark Earth, Foliage Green and Wolf Gray

BCMGUNFIGHTER KAG-KM - KeyMod Version \$18.95

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3 DESANTIS GUNHIDE DSD RIG

For a more secure carry option for concealed carry, the DSD Rig allows security personnel and undercover users to discreetly carry a submachine gun and two full-sized magazines (on the opposite side). The weapon can be fired quickly from a tether, and a quick-detach system allows for rapid disengagement of the weapon from the rig for extended engagements. The DSD Rig is made from mil-spec nylon webbing and includes pouches for 9mm and 5.56mm magazines. Available for right- or left-side carry, it's concealable under a windbreaker or mid-length jacket. Its MSRP is \$176.

(desantisholster.com; 800-424-1236)

4 GALCO SLC STRAP

Galco's Simple Lanyard and Carrying (SLC) strap features a steel, HK-style snap hook for quick and effortless transitions from a conventional two-point sling to a single-point sling position that keeps your tactical rifle or shotgun in front of you for easy cross-shoulder transitions. The conventional, two-point sling position allows for muzzle-up or muzzle-down carry over the shoulder or across the back. Polycarbonate clasps make it easy to adjust the sling to fit any shooter. The SLC is made from durable, 1-inch-wide, nylon webbing for maximum strength and a long service life, and its ambidextrous design accommodates right- and left-handed shooters. Its MSRP is \$26. (galcogunleather.com; 800-874-2526)



5 HARD POINT OSS

The Over-Shoulder Sling (OSS) from Hard Point attaches directly to any armor plate carrier system with MOLLE webbing on the back panel, and it runs over both shoulders for users who prefer a single-point attachment in the center of the chest. With clips made of powder-coated stainless steel, this is a piece of gear that will stand up to long hours of hard use. Made from oversized, heavy-duty bungee material that won't bounce but will absorb shock and provide necessary give, the ambidextrous OSS also provides a buttstock catch-point to help support a proper stock weld. It can also be used without armor. Its MSRP is \$50. (hrdpnt.com; 208-457-2010)



6 JERSEY TACTICAL CHALKER SLING

Originally developed by retired U.S. Navy SEAL Command Master Chief Dennis "The Snake" Chalker, the second generation of the H-harness "Chalker Sling" is more versatile than ever. A centered single-point attachment for use with any weapon platform (crossbows, too!) and even shields, allows the user to move the slung weapon across the body without obstructing their vision. A red-strapped quick-release shackle allows the Chalker to be worn over utilities or a vest, or covertly beneath a shirt with the attachment point protruding between buttons when needed. Its MSRP is \$99. (jerseytactical.com; 908-995-2700)

7 LARUE TACTICAL PADDED SLING

Simple and effective, LaRue's padded two-point sling is comfortable for drills and at the range wearing just a T-shirt, and it's versatile over cumbersome chest gear and helmets. Quick-detach swivels at each end allow for easy removal, and the length can easily be shortened and lengthened with just one hand by pulling the strap. The lightweight aluminum and steel adjustment cam that holds the length in place is the same ALICE style used by the military for years. The padded shoulder area section is made of closed-cell foam, and the sling's length adjusts from 45 to 58 inches with 18 inches of take-up travel with the adjustment strap. LaRue Tactical's Padded Sling has an MSRP of \$70. (larue.com; 512-259-1585)





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-BRUCE LEE



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8 MAGPUL MS3 GEN2 SLING

Another solid two-to-one convertible sling, the Magpul MS3 Gen2 tactical sling is made of high-end materials with steel and high-strength polymer hardware, as one would expect from Magpul. This is one sling that is actually comfortable for transitioning your weapon to your back while making it easily accessible for the reverse transition. Made from custom nylon webbing chosen for its comfort and strength, and now featuring Magpul's MS1 slider, the MS3 Gen2 sling is easily adjustable for shooter size and preference. It also features a lightweight, heavy-duty, polymer and steel paraclip to allow for easy manipulations in emergency situations. (magpul.com; 303-828-3460)



features quick-release Battle-Buckles hardware and is ambidextrous. Its tubular webbing is strong as well as twist and tangle free. The Patrol Sling's MSRP is \$30. (specopsbrand.com; 866-773-2677)

9 SIMPLE SINGLE TACTICAL TETHER

A minimalist sling solution for users wearing a vest or armor with MOLLE webbing, the Tactical Tether affixes to the armor beginning on the lower back and going over the shoulder. This configuration prevents sagging that often occurs with tethers affixed only to the shoulder, allowing the weight to be distributed across the shoulder and back. It also comes with an epaulet to keep it in place in case a user's vest doesn't have one. Available in black or OD green, its MSRP is \$24. (simplesinglesling.com)

**10 SPEC-OPS PATROL SLING**

Single-point slings are certainly versatile and nimble, but for some, they can be clumsy and feel sloppy in some situations. The Patrol Sling provides the best of both worlds, letting users transition from single-point carry to the stability of a two-point sling in a second, without removing the sling from the body. The sling

**12 YANKEE HILL MACHINE 9753**

These slings attach to Yankee Hill Machine (YHM) rear sling adapters via a threaded "C-Lock" that is covered in nylon to prevent reflection. Built into the sling is a bungee design that returns the firearm to the user when released. YHM's 9753 single-point sling is made in the U.S.A. from tough, 1.5-inch-wide nylon webbing. Available in black, green digital camo and brown digital camo, its MSRP is \$64. (yhm.net; 877-892-6533)

13 ZAHAL SHOULDER HARNESS SLING

The ultimate option for security personnel or others who carry a concealed submachine gun or a pistol with a stock, the Shoulder Harness Sling from Zahal Israeli Tactical Gear is a solid solution. Wide straps and a spine pad allow for comfortable, long-term wear, and a stout bungee with a single-point attachment keeps a user's weapon concealed under a jacket or coat and immediately ready for use. Its MSRP is \$33. (zahal.org) 



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LAS VEGAS



ZEBRA

FOR

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's Zebra Unit is one of the best SWAT teams in the country. Its members train hard, often, and in a number of environments, and once a year Zebra offers a week-long training course for other U.S. law enforcement agencies. Course attendees can learn to take down vehicles like buses, breach many structures, use less-lethal gear and much more, all from top instructors.



MEET THE 40-MAN ZEBRA UNIT WHOSE STRIPES GET EARNED AND TESTED TO THE EXTREME—24/7.

>>> BY JAKE SWANSON

FE



S.W.A.T. These letters set the mind churning, conjuring images of black-clad supermen bristling with weapons and equipment leaping through windows and blowing doors off hinges, then performing a delicate yet violent ballet as they overwhelm their objective with the goal of saving the innocent and punishing the guilty. Not too long ago, I spent a week in an intermediate SWAT course with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD), and I can tell you firsthand that, with the exception of the black uniforms, when you imagine SWAT, these are the guys you see in your mind's eye.

The Las Vegas Metro PD covers all of the unincorporated areas of Clark County, and as such it is responsible for a lot more than just that glittering island in a sea of desert. Las Vegas itself is a mere 140 square miles, a tiny piece of Clark County's sprawling 8,091 square miles. Clark County has a normal population of 2 million, but in 2011 over 365 million people visited Las Vegas alone. With every kind of landscape and terrain—from mountaintops to rivers, deserts, cities, the Hoover Dam and countless other environments—the 40 men of the LVMPD's "Zebra Unit," or simply "Z," are indeed those supermen, and once a year they invite tactical officers from around the country to come learn how they do it. In 2013, I was lucky enough to be able to attend and see Zebra Unit in action.

TEAM TACTICS

This article is not just a chance to sum up the five days of exceptional training Zebra provided, but here are some of the topics covered by the over 250 years of SWAT experience that the instructors share: high-risk search warrant service, active-shooter responses, hostage rescues, vehicle assaults (both cars and buses), downed-officer rescues, containment, explosive breaching, and slow and methodical team tactics. This is a lot of information to get downrange in five days, but the caliber of Zebra's instructing officers allowed us to drink heartily from this fire hose of knowledge. Oh, and let's not forget that we had the requisite shoot-off for our class' "Top Gun" spot.

As I said, this was not a basic SWAT course. Everyone who attended serves as a tactical officer, and as such we were expected to arrive with the required skills. Zebra's mission during the week was to tell, show, teach and assist us in learning how they do it, because they do it right, and anything we could take back to our home agencies would only help us do our jobs better and safer.

The four- and five-man active-shooter response tactics I saw during the training are the best I have seen, period. Patrol officers are taught and updated so that they can either form their own cells as the first responders or they can be folded in with SWAT members as they arrive in a cohesive and effective tool to mitigate the horror that is today's active-shooter scenario. Search warrants (Vegas style)



1. The Zebra Unit is highly trained when it comes to stopping active shooters, working alone or with a larger element. **2.** Instructors demonstrate how to explosively breach a window. **3.** Zebra Unit operators are masters of clearing various structures, flowing seamlessly between rooms. **4.** On the square range, students compete to win the “Top Gun” title among course attendees.



of the woods, I am sure it will be a much worse day for the bad guys than it will be for the hostages. Their standard passenger vehicle takedowns are a sight to see. From the approaches to breaking windows and apprehending suspects, the tactics we learned did not miss a beat.

All that and more was crammed into five days of classroom, range and field training. If not for the unbelievable competence and professionalism of our instructors, there is no way any of us would have been able to retain the sheer volume of data to which we were exposed. Day five was exercise day, which saw us broken up into operational teams and given the brief on our next obstacle. Then it was up to us to derive the plan and execute. The exercises involved schools, vehicles, hostages, search warrants—all with more role-players than expected—not to mention flashbangs, K9 units and a sense of urgency that you don’t usually find in training scenarios. We spent our last day thinking, planning, attempting, readjusting and learning. Our cadre of teachers was there every step of the way to observe so that in the after-action reports we actually got the “take-homes” as far as lessons learned, ensuring we implement these tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) in the real world.

TIER ONE SWAT

People from all over the world come to Vegas to play, to act in ways they never would at home, and to explore the world of excess. There is another contingent that comes here—those who put their lives on the line so that others may live. Vegas is a Mecca of tactics and thought-provoking innovation in this constantly evolving world. Operators from every organization come to share thoughts, ideas and capabilities with Vegas Metro SWAT, and

opened my eyes to the world of entry team officers working in pairs. No more “You go left and I’ll go right” in my world. Now I understand how to flow into and through a space with my partner, addressing all threats with a speed and level of mutually supporting cover that was previously lacking in my tactical toolbox.

Explosive breaching really goes hand in hand with hostage rescues. When it comes to high explosives, there is a very small margin for error, and I can tell you I have not even heard about anyone who breaches better than Vegas. With over 250 operational explosive breaches under their belts, these guys are surgeons. Their backup plans have backup plans, and when a hostage is in imminent danger, Zebra gets inside like greased lightning, and their ability to dominate spaces, mitigate threats and remove hostages from harm’s way is awe-inspiring.

When called upon to rescue a downed officer—either a patrol officer or a team member who goes down during an operation—things tend to get rushed and thrown together. Not so in Clark County. The rescue drills are methodically analyzed, tested, modified, retested and practiced to a level of competence that makes me

think that if I ever get shot and cannot self-evacuate, I hope these guys are coming to get my bacon out of the fire. If I can get just one thing I bring back from this course implemented at my agency, I hope it is the downed-officer rescue training I learned while there. Containment may not seem very sexy, but it really is the most important aspect of tactical operations after a successful entry. It turns out that there is a whole lot more science and procedure to

“THEIR ABILITY TO DOMINATE SPACES, MITIGATE THREATS AND REMOVE HOSTAGES FROM HARM’S WAY IS AWE-INSPIRING.”

it than I used to think. It is a vital component and needs to be carried out by highly competent SWAT officers, not passed off to patrol as an additional duty.

Vegas Metro SWAT has pretty much done it all, but they are happy to say that they have never had to do a bus takedown. They train like hell for it, though, and have come up with a definitive plan for every type of bus in their jurisdiction. But I can tell you that if someone is ever dumb enough to take hostages on one in Zebra’s neck

there is good reason. In the community of non-federal law enforcement, the LVMPD’s Zebra Unit is without a doubt Tier One. Their absolute commitment to excellence is unparalleled; men train and wait years for a coveted spot on the team. Some of the instructors have been with Zebra for over 20 years operationally.

The 40 men of Zebra average over 350 high-risk warrants and 50 hostage rescues a year. I’m not sure about you, but that is a pretty serious operational tempo in my



1. The Zebra Unit shows students how to rescue hostages from several types of common vehicles, including buses.
2. Course students run through a mock active-shooter takedown scenario.

world. One thing that was repeated over and over to us was that they were there to teach us how they do it; our job was to take from this course a new set of tools we could incorporate into our departments as needed and where applicable. These lessons we were taught were not based on ego, but instead on real-world application and testing. The men of Zebra were not trying to make us clones of them, either—as true professionals, they trusted us with their hard-earned knowledge so we could better ourselves. To a man I can tell you that every attendee of the 2013 course left a better, more capable officer than he arrived.

To close out this brief view of our experience in Vegas, there are a few more things you might want to know. Our instructors were not sent to teach; they remained operational the entire time we were there. Warrants were served and rescues were made while we were trying to get some sleep at night. The sacrifices made by the teaching cadre were huge. They weren't just burning the candle at both ends—they tossed it into an incinerator.

The "Top Gun" of our class went to a lieutenant who I personally would only want to get into a fight with if he was on my side. We had another interesting

classmate, the new commanding officer of Zebra itself, who was there to make sure he knew his men's capabilities. No special consideration was given; he attended as an operator just like the rest of us. In some casual conversations with him, I found out he was with us after just completing their breaching course and the negotiator program, and there was no rest in sight for him, with sniper school next on his agenda. It is rare to have a commanding officer with such commitment to not only be aware of how his men operate, but to earn the qualifications to jump into a stack and have his men trust him without reservation because he has put "boot to ass" and earned the right to bear the Zebra name. Zebra has been doing it a long time, and I can tell you Vegas is in good hands.

We live in a world where we can never know enough. And while there is no "one-stop shopping experience" for a SWAT officer, the LVMPD's Zebra Unit is as close to a megastore as you will find. **TV**

DI

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1

ALST460 Tactical Blast Strip

As thin as a pamphlet but offering the bark of a flashbang grenade, the ALST460 Tactical Blast Strip from Amtec Less-Lethal Systems is a single-use stun munition that produces 175 decibels of sound at 7 feet. Slipped under a door, the Tactical Blast Strip can be triggered alone or with others with a 5-meter electric match to provide instant disorientation during a dynamic entry. It also gives off a 10-million candela burst of light with a pressure wave that adds to the extreme but non-destructive physiological effects. This is truly a big bang for the buck when an impressive distraction with little damage and minimal human harm is needed. (lesslethal.com; 850-223-4066)

2

ESP Spray Lights

A truly convenient and effective less-lethal option in aerosol pepper spray, which is designated to incapacitate the recipient long enough to have restraints applied. The Euro Security Products (ESP) Spray Lights not only have a powerful spray but also built-in flashlights that can help blind or identify the target in dark conditions. The Spray Light series is available in various sizes and features a super-bright LED in the cap, which also serves as a switch. (euro-security.info/en)

3

ESP Expandable Batons

The expandable baton has become a mainstay of less-lethal self-protection for many law enforcement officers and civilians. The new expandable batons from ESP are incredibly strong and are made to mount a variety of attachments so that they can be used to pry, break glass, sever steel cables and locks, and even serve as innocuous flashlights. As an easily transported and compact kit, the expandable baton, with its accessories, allows an officer to have a full set of options to defeat not only a violent criminal, but also cut off a chain or lock, break a window to save a life or, with an optional mirror, see what is around a corner or underneath a vehicle. (euro-security.info/en)

4

ESP Textile Handcuffs

ESP's disposable Textile Handcuffs can be easily carried, deployed and used while providing a secure binding that has proven to be impossible for a prisoner to defeat. ESP offers the patented Textile Handcuffs in easy-to-carry packs in various quantities, making them a great option for crowd control work. When required, the Textile Handcuffs can be cut off with a hand-safe cutter from ESP that can also be used to cut away clothes or seat belts in an emergency. (euro-security.info/en)

SWAT STUFF



HIGH-SPEED,
LOW-DRAG GEAR

UNCOVERED AT

THE 32ND ANNUAL
SWAT ROUNDUP.

BY ANDRE' M. DALL'AU

The 32nd Annual SWAT Roundup International (SRI) was held recently in November of 2014 near Orlando, Florida.

The Orange County Sheriff's Office hosted the event at its range. The SRI is one of the longest-running and preeminent international SWAT competitions held in the U.S. The SRI includes world-class training classes and a half-dozen, high-speed, individual and team competitive events for the dozens of overseas, out-of-state and Florida-based special operations teams who participate. The objective of the SRI is to have the teams come together to learn from each other and see new techniques as well as the newest and best gear available on the market. An onsite trade show showcases international manufacturers who acknowledge that this venue is one of the best to get the right gear in front of the right people. Here are some of the best new products shown at the 2014 SWAT Roundup International.



The ALST460 Tactical Blast Strip from Amtec Less-Lethal Systems is a single-use stun munition that is easy to slide under a door. It produces a very loud sound and burst of light.

5

ESP Tactical Backpack

ESP's Tactical Backpack makes it easy to transport a large quantity of useful equipment and ensure its immediate availability for police or emergency rescue operations. Thanks to its special design, this backpack organizes the equipment according to the needs and specific requirements of the given unit. The inside of the backpack features carry straps that can be adjusted as necessary for the placement of gear. The front and back of the backpack also contain special pockets for ballistic protection.

(euro-security.info/en)

6

FoxFury AWL-P Laser-Tac

The tough, waterproof FoxFury AWL-P Laser-Tac mounts to most full-sized pistol rails and provides a 140-lumen CREE LED light as well as a red laser. It has ambidextrous controls with three modes (including turbo-strobe) of illumination. The red laser has a separate on/off switch and can be used on its own or in conjunction with the white light. The unit weighs only 2.4 ounces and is 3.1 inches long. It's powered by a CR123 battery. (foxfury.com; 844-369-3879)

7

Lancer Adaptive Magwell

Lancer's Adaptive Magwell is designed to work on mil-spec 5.56mm NATO AR-pattern rifles and carbines with "winter" triggerguards. Easy to install, the magazine well can cut reloading time in half by providing a funnel that will allow the shooter to keep their eyes on the target even under high stress. Installing the Adaptive Magwell requires no permanent modifications to the host weapon. One- and two-piece designs are available. The Adaptive Magwell incorporates tensioning screws to eliminate any rattle, and it secures to the rifle's trigger-guard. (lancer-systems.com; 610-973-2600)

8

Lancer Carbon-Fiber Sig Handguards

Lancer is offering its octagonal, carbon-fiber, free-floating LCH handguards for SIG516 and SIG716 rifles. These handguards feature aluminum Picatinny top rails, and side cooling slots accept 2-, 4- and 5-inch accessory rails as well as an optional QD sling attachment. Slots at 6 o'clock accept rails for mounting bipods. Lancer is currently offering 7.4- and 13.1-inch LCH models, and the longer versions feature a cutout to expose the adjustable gas block. All contours are snag free thanks to a proprietary process. (lancer-systems.com; 610-973-2600)



9 MOHOC Elite Ops Camera

The Military-Optimized Helmet Camera (MOHOC) allows tactical teams to record their operations and trainers to evaluate student performance. The MOHOC Elite Ops Camera, waterproof to 10 meters, has a revolutionary helmet contour for a better fit and is attached via Velcro to the top or side of helmets. The MOHOC camera records sound and has a 140-degree field of view. It can record hours of broadcast-quality, low-light HD video and still photos at the same time, either with a convenient release or by remote control using wireless transmission. (mohoc.com; 208-806-1391)

10 Nightstick TAC-460XL-K01

Most tactical carbine shooters think that an on-board light is a mandatory accessory. The new Nightstick TAC-460XL-K01 long gun light kit has every possible feature but at a very reasonable cost. It has a 1.5-hour run time using two included CR123 batteries, producing 800 lumens of



light that can spot targets out to over 200 meters. The light comes with a tail-cap switch as well as weapon-mounted Picatinny rings and a remote pressure switch. (mynightstick.com; 469-326-9400)

11 Nightstick NSR-9944XL

The Nightstick NSR-9944XL offers a powerful 600-lumen LED floodlight as well as a focused, 650-lumen primary LED beam. Waterproof to 1 meter, the aluminum NSR-9944XL has a tail cap and mid-body push buttons that will illuminate objects out to 275 meters. The Nightstick comes with a rechargeable lithium-ion

Officers can add various attachments to their modular, expandable ESP batons to turn them into wire cutters, inspection devices, glass breakers and more with ease.

battery as well a charger and AC and 12-volt DC power supplies. (mynightstick.com; 469-326-9400)

12 Ring Power Rook Enhanced

The Rook Critical Incident Vehicle, manufactured by Ring Power, is made from the powerful Tier IV Cat chassis. Weighing 13,000 pounds with wide rubber tracks, the Rook has dual joystick controls as well as an enclosed cab with NIJ Level IV armor and bulletproof glass. It can also be fitted with four attachments, including the Armored Deployment Platform, the Hydraulic Breaching Ram

and the Grapple Claw for tactical demolition or clearing road-blocks and debris. The newest Rook now has a bolted-together exterior, as opposed to its previously welded-together design, to ease repair and replacement of individual assemblies. In addition, the video monitor is now a touchscreen and the camera system is cellular, meaning video can be transmitted to any mobile device like a tablet or smartphone. (ringpower.com; 904-494-7531)

13 Rogers Glock Mag Well Adapter

The Rogers Glock Mag Well Adapter provides a beveled lead-in for quickly reloading a Glock pistol. The adapter also covers the rear edge of the mag well, which frequently catches the top of a magazine, interfering with either a competition or tactical reload. Easily installed by the shooter with an included Allen wrench, adapters are available for Gen1, Gen2, Gen3 and Gen4 Glockes and require no permanent modification. (holsterops.com; 904-646-0141)





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14



15



16

17



14 Rogers Rail Light

A bright idea at a low price, the Rogers Rail Light can be slipped onto any pistol's Picatinny rail to provide a target-illuminating light aligned with the barrel at the touch of the non-shooting-hand thumb. Conveniently ambidextrous, the mount positions the AAA-powered Streamlight Microstream flashlight either to the right or left of the trigger. The Rogers Rail Light can be easily carried in a vest or uniform pocket and then clipped on when needed. (holsterops.com; 904-646-0141)

15 Rogers Tap Rack Training Aid

Striker-fired pistols have to be racked to cock the pistol, so for training demonstrations with an empty magazine inserted, the user has to remove the magazine, release the slide and reinsert the magazine. While that is not normally an issue for casual use, it can waste time for instructors teaching immediate action drills. To help facilitate racking a slide with an empty magazine inserted, the Rogers Tap Rack Training Aid is now available for 9mm, .40 S&W and .45 ACP magazines. It allows the slide to be safely and freely operated without picking up anything from the magazine or locking in the open position. (holsterops.com; 904-646-0141)

16 Tifosi Talos Tactical Eye Protection

The Talos Tactical glasses from Tifosi

are the newest, lightweight, affordable eye protection available. Weighing just 30 grams, the Talos Tactical has a non-reflective matte black finish, with its frame and lenses meeting the ANSI Z87.1 safety standard for impact, clarity and eye coverage. The Talos Tactical also features adjustable, hydrophilic ear and nose pieces so that a wide range of wearers can find the best fit for them. Each Talos Tactical comes with three sets of condition-specific lenses in smoke, clear and high-contrast red. (tifositactical.com; 877-530-0815)

17 TRU-SPEC 24-7 Series Ascent Pants

The new and excellently tailored TRU-SPEC 24-7 Series Ascent pants are perfect for the range, hunt or even casual Friday. Made of 6.5-ounce, polyester/cotton micro rip-stop fabric with a comfort slider waistband for a superior fit and ease of movement, the Ascent is treated with a stain- and fade-resistant Teflon coating. The Ascent has a reinforced, 2.5-inch-wide front knife/flashlight utility pocket, a badge holder on the front belt loop, inset cargo pockets and discreetly reinforced knees for a streamlined appearance (with internal knee pockets for optional knee pads). It also features an easy-access pocket behind each cargo pocket that fits most cell phones. (truspec.com; 800-241-9414)

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BATTLEDRESS



A look at what high technology is bringing to today's frontline troops and lawmen in the mean streets.

AS ANY WARRIOR KNOWS, pounds equal pain. But over time, instead of decreasing the pounds and pain, today's gear needs have only dramatically increased. Part of the reason for the gear weight increase is the evolving threats. But the following two companies are working hard to reverse this trend.

ADVANCED ARMOR

Morgan Advanced Materials keeps the good guys securely suited up for the danger zone!

BY DONALD J. MIHALEK

Morgan Advanced Materials is a UK-based global technology leader that designs and manufactures high-performance combat helmets and body armor. Its composite designs include multi-hit ballistic inserts for military, police and civilian end-users worldwide. Morgan Advanced Materials has supplied body armor systems to the UK Ministry of Defence for more than 25 years, delivering more than 40,000 pairs of Osprey body armor plates and 80,000 MK7 combat helmets for operations in Afghanistan.

For deactivating bombs, Morgan has engineered and created the ERGOTEC 4000 Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) suit that is ergonomically designed to provide the wearer with maximum protection and full freedom of movement. The suit incorporates the ERGOTEC 4000 breast-plate, "which minimizes the transmission of shockwave energy to the operator's torso in the event of an explosive interaction."

It also uses an innovative articulated design that incorporates a three-piece telescopic construction, enhancing flexibility with no loss of blast de-coupling capability. The suit also includes the unique ERGOTEC 4000 helmet and collar, which provides protection against radial and linear head acceleration during a blast event.

In an effort to remove the pain from the pounds, Morgan has also created The Lightweight Armor Soldier Architecture

The aptly named Morgan Advanced Materials creates everything from helmets to armor plates.



“Morgan Advanced Materials has supplied body armor systems to the UK Ministry of Defence for more than 25 years.”

(LASA) and touts it as the most advanced lightweight soldier system in the world. The LASA offers a 25-percent weight reduction against previous armor systems, "improving mobility and reducing wearer fatigue."

Morgan says the LASA provides significant enhancement in security and comfort over current armor systems. The torso system is fully compatible with the family of helmets and lower body protection, delivering maximum coverage and protection while maintaining optimum comfort while also ensuring that the soldier can fight from any position, including prone. The body armor is ultra-lightweight and durable, spe-

cifically designed for the rugged environments encountered by international military and security personnel. The system also offers pelvic protection, which is secure and comfortable for patrolling on foot or by vehicle, and kneepads that are designed to be fully operable in rough terrain.

Duncan Eldridge, the president of Morgan Advanced Materials, said, "We have conducted significant research and development to test the boundaries of what is possible with soldier protection systems. While safety remains paramount, reducing weight is the key to enhancing mobility and minimizing fatigue. The engineering team has been working on developments to provide a 30-percent weight reduction for our world-leading helmets and a 25-percent weight reduction for our ballistic plates, compared with competitive solutions."

ARMORED VEHICLES: Morgan also offers other protective systems for armored vehicles, including a composite system that can provide "a highly effective protective shield with outstanding ballistic and mechanical performance." The company touts the system as being up to 50-percent lighter than the equivalent steel armor when used to protect against armor-piercing rounds, and it's also able to defeat other threats, including fragmentation, high-velocity small arms, grenade attacks, mine blasts and burning fluids.

Morgan is working hard to protect those warfighters who operate in harm's way. Morgan Advanced Materials' Composites and Defense Systems were recently awarded two body armor development contracts by the Canadian government, which will focus on a next-generation, lightweight, low-profile, higher-performing design for personal armor plates. The body armor will provide protection for high threat levels, including difficult multi-hit requirements. For more information, visit morganadvancedmaterials.com.

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TANK-TOUGH GATORSKINS

Extremely tough apparel made to protect operators in the toughest of extremes!

BY N.E. MACDOUGALD

In 1973, Michael Burke, the founder of GatorSkins, joined the U.S. Army, enlisting in the 82nd Airborne Division. He was told he could not enlist for Special Forces at the time. Burke said, “You had to have one tour under your belt first. I got out of the 82nd in 1976 and went directly to California, to the Coastal School of Deep Sea Diving, and became qualified as a diver. I worked for a few local dive companies off the California coast.

“I was a dive-tender for a month or so, until my diver got arrested. I was promoted to diver. The casualty rate for divers was extremely high during that time, so I decided after several months of this to try something

“GatorSkins will stretch horizontally and enhance the wearer’s movement but will not stretch vertically, so they don’t lose their shape.”

new. I had read about Tom Brown, ‘The Tracker,’ in *Reader’s Digest*. So I contacted him and found that he was starting his first class in survival and tracking in eastern Pennsylvania and the New Jersey Pine Barrens. I attended his first class, graduated and became his head instructor for the next two years. We taught classes on wilderness tradecraft and the Southern Apache approach to living in the woods.”

But Burke missed the military and knew he had further goals to fulfill, so he rejoined the U.S. Army, opting for Special Forces. After completing training, he got married and started a family. “I was spending a lot of time away from home and wanted to see my kids grow up, so I transferred to a Special Forces reserve unit. I could stay with the group and still be with my kids. I joined the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Police Department as a patrol officer.”

After six months, he joined the SWAT team and became the PT instructor. He stayed with the HPD for three years until becoming a narcotics agent for the state’s Attorney General’s office. For the next 14 years, he worked undercover throughout Pennsylvania, concentrating on outlaw



The all new AUG A3 M1 and the L9-A1 pistol, the perfect combination for sports shooters and law enforcement professionals, alike.



AUG A3 M1 Rifle

The new multi-configurable AUG A3 M1 variant of the Steyr’s venerable bullpup platform marks the introduction of MUD and the return of OD Green to its stock color options and adds new features like a front Quick-Disconnect Sling Swivel to classic characteristics like the quick-detach 16-inch barrel and battle-proven short-stroke gas-piston operation. It is available in Short-Rail, High-Rail and Integrated Optic versions with either a 1.5X or 3X scope. At 28.15 inches, Y SBR?



L-A1 Pistol

Featuring a full-length slide, 4.5-inch cold-hammer-forged barrel and 17-round magazine capacity for its 9x19mm Luger chambering and 12 rounds for .40 S&W, the new L-A1 service pistol was designed for the serious shooter to serve the dual role of a duty and sporting handgun. With its comfortable ergonomics, a remarkably low bore axis, a crisp short-reset trigger, extreme reliability and amazing accuracy, the L-A1 is the perfect partner on the range and off.



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GatorSkins makes several warm, windproof garments to protect civilians and operators.



shape. If you punch a hole in it, it won't rip. If you cut it with scissors, it won't fray due to the fabric's lock-knit construction.

"The shirts can be worn as a base layer to keep you warm, or as an outer garment, as a lightweight windbreak. GatorSkins are worn loose, not tight. The looser you wear them, the warmer you stay. Our Zip-Neck shirt features hand-warmer pockets and thumbhole sleeves, which keep the cuff below your knuckles. So, when you pull gloves on, the shirt cuff rides into the glove. This prevents cold air from going up your sleeve—it goes over your sleeve."

motorcycle gangs. He was accepted into many of the clubhouses of the most notorious motorcycle gangs in the U.S.

Burke retired from working in law enforcement in 2005 and opened a motorcycle clothing store. "I discovered the GatorSkins fabric roughly five years ago. It had been developed by a large U.S. corporation but was left to languish. Seeing the potential for motorcycle riders and how well the fabric would work for them, I investigated further. Four months later, I was making GatorSkins."

TOUGH AS NAILS: "GatorSkins is a unique fabric. It's lighter than paper, does not retain scents, is three times warmer than wool for its weight, wicks sweat, breathes and repels water. But most importantly, it's 100-percent windproof. It's the only lightweight knitted material that has these qualities. Made in the U.S.A., GatorSkins is owned by a service-disabled veteran: Me.

"GatorSkins will stretch horizontally and enhance the wearer's movement but will not stretch vertically, so they don't lose their

BURKE ON GATORSKINS: "Because of connections with the military and former teammates who have gone on to assignments in three-letter agencies and elsewhere, we're selling GatorSkins to teams working in the world's highest levels of operational command. These operators are moving in hostile territory for several days at a time. They love their GatorSkins. We get calls and messages often from these professionals. *That* makes me feel good." For more information, visit gatorskins.com or call 717-755-7105. **TW**

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THE '66 COMPANY'S M40-66 VIETNAM SNIPER





The new M40-66 rifle is a fitting tribute to the original M40s U.S. Marine snipers fielded in Vietnam in 1966. It looks and handles like the classic but offers far superior accuracy. Shown with a custom 3-9x40mm Leupold VX-2 scope.

When it comes to the sniper rifle, the M40 is the start of a long and storied journey. While it is certainly not the first sniper rifle fielded by the United States Marines Corps, it marked a change in mindset. As usual, it was a change driven by a need, one met through the ingenuity and ability to “adapt and overcome” by ground-pounding Marines fighting in the trenches of Vietnam.

Much of the improvements in tactics and equipment used today are driven by the ingenuity of the guys on the ground. It’s true of the military, and it was certainly true of my police career. Doing what is needed, in spite of command or policy, is the norm. It was (and is) just as true for those who have operated as military snipers since the inception of the task. Getting the equipment you need as a soldier, when you need it, seems an anomaly, at least to most combat veterans I have talked to. It was true for my father (a World War II veteran), and it still rings true for many serving in harm’s way today. Sniper rifles were no exception in Vietnam.

JUNGLE HUNTERS

It’s important to remember that there was no issued sniper rifle at the time—that was yet to come. The first bolt-action rifles fielded in Vietnam for sniping were target rifles. Winchester Model 70 rifles were repurposed for the sniper mission with slotted receivers and heavy barrels. Reportedly, there were around 1,000 .30-06 rifles rebuilt in the early 1960s for match shooting. Carlos Hathcock, one of the most famous USMC snipers, used one of these Winchester Model 70 target rifles equipped with an Unertl scope during his first tour, resulting in most of his 93 confirmed kills. There were also stories of Marines having hunting rifles sent over from home since the need for sniping out-paced the ability to provide rifles. This is just another example of the

Marines’ ingenuity and ability to adapt. Concurrently, it confirmed the need for a new rifle, one dedicated to the sniper’s task. It also birthed the idea that a commercial target rifle was a good starting point. While it might seem controversial today, it just seemed logical at that point in time.

The Marine Corps’ classic M40 returns with traditional style and sub-MOA upgrades!

»»»»» BY DAVID BAHDE



ABOVE LEFT: The '66 Company added a thick Pachmayr Decelerator buttstock to help absorb recoil and keep the M40-66 in position. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Uncle Mike's heavy-duty sling swivels held the beautiful Turner Saddlery M1907 shooting sling.

When it came time to issue a dedicated sniper rifle in 1966, the Marines initially looked to Winchester, but changes in the pre-64 Model 70 prompted them to look elsewhere. Requirements included the use of the 7.62mm NATO round, clip slotting, a dull finish on the stock, a medium-contour barrel and fixed military sling swivels. Remington's Model 40-X, a target version of the Model 700, turned out to be the best start. Remington did its best to meet all of the requirements. The initial order was for 700 Model 40-X target/varmint rifles built to these specifications, with free-floating, 1-in-10-inch-twist barrels, and designated the M40. Most initial rifles were equipped with Redfield 3-9X Accu-Range scopes, which were usable out to 1,000 yards. While the original M40's 2-MOA accuracy requirement may not be "precise" by today's standards, it was more than accurate enough for combat conditions at the time.

Subsequent versions of the M40, from the M40A1 through the M40A5, saw significant upgrades, but many still enjoy the history and nostalgia of the first rifles. Replicas are incredibly valuable, especially if they are period correct. Remington offered a modern version for a few years, and The '66 Company, formerly Tactical Rifles, now offers another look back at this historic rifle.

NO SAFE QUEEN

The '66 Company decided to build more of a "dedication to" than a replica of a 1966 M40 rifle. Hand-built using old-school techniques, the M40-66 is more of a shooter than a collector's piece, forgoing some of the military requirements. This helps keep the cost down a bit yet makes it easier to shoot a really nice rifle indicative of a period piece. Most have no use for (or would know what to do with) a clip slot, so the action is clean. It has been blueprinted and accurized. The M40-66 has

The test rifle came with a custom Leupold scope in Badger Ordnance rings—all built to look like the original's scope setup.

a traditional bolt handle, and the trigger is expertly tuned to a crisp 2.75-pound pull with no creep or overtravel. The stainless steel, match-grade, 1-in-10-inch-twist barrel is meticulously hand lapped and mated to a precision-ground, heavyweight recoil lug.

The action is pillar bedded into a top-grade American walnut stock. The barrel channel and interior is also sealed, which helps maintain rigidity and fights unwanted moisture. Far superior to the original, the M40-66's stock is hand oiled to a dull, glare-free luster. A Pachmayr Decelerator pad is installed for shooting comfort. Tactical Rifles also installs a heavyweight, stainless steel, hinged floorplate, adding to the rifle's smooth lines, strength and reliability.

My test rifle came equipped with an engraved 3-9x40mm VX-2 scope with a mil-dot reticle from the Leupold Custom Shop. Leupold's Custom Dial System (CDS) allows you to customize your elevation knob, making for a tidy little package. The scope was mounted in Badger Ordnance's M40 replica rings and base. All together, this scope setup is very similar to the original's—it's super strong and very well finished. The '66 Company also offers a new Hi-Lux scope that is close to the original Redfield. It's a replica of 1960s-era scopes but has been upgraded with precision-ground glass, a complete rebuild of all the internal parts and 0.25-MOA target knobs. Finally, a beautiful, brown leather Turner Saddlery M1907 shooting sling was attached to the rifle using Uncle Mike's heavy-duty sling swivels.

TRIED & TRUE

Let me start by saying I'm old enough to remember precision rifles with wood

SPEC BOX

THE '66 COMPANY M40-66

CALIBER: 7.62mm NATO

BARREL: 24 inches

OA LENGTH: 45 inches

WEIGHT: 10 pounds (empty)

STOCK: American walnut

SIGHTS: None

ACTION: Bolt

FINISH: Matte black

CAPACITY: 5+1

MSRP: \$3,395

PERFORMANCE

THE '66 COMPANY M40-66

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Black Hills 175 OTM	2,592	0.52
Desert Tech 175 OTM	2,600	0.49
Federal 168 Gold Medal Match	2,652	0.54
Hornady 155 TAP A-MAX	2,750	0.47
Nosler 168 Custom Competition	2,650	0.44

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

stocks, so the accuracy of this rifle was no surprise to me. All but unheard of these days, wood stocks still help match-grade M1A rifles produce incredible accuracy. While not as impervious to the elements or abuse as composite stocks, they can be very rugged and reliable. There is a feel to wood that fiberglass, or even the space-age metal stocks of today, will never have.

Built to the highest match standards, the M40-66 is as accurate as you can get short of using a benchrest rifle. Every factory load grouped at or near 0.5 inches, and several groups were tighter than that. I fired all of the groups from prone using my pack as a rest. With handloads, I have no doubt that the M40-66 could produce groups in the 0.25-MOA range. My best group for the day, measuring 0.44 inches, came from Nosler's Custom Competition 168-grain load. This ammunition is proving to be some of the most accurate I've ever used.

Testing at longer ranges yielded the same accuracy, with one group at 300 yards measuring less than an inch using the Nosler ammunition. Hornady's 155-grain TAP A-MAX was also incredibly accurate at this range, grouping very similarly. The rifle remained accurate while whacking steel targets at 400, 500 and 600 yards. Again, I used a bag as a rest. Bipods were unheard of during this rifle's time, especially in the military. In fact, when I began training a few decades ago, many USMC sniper trainers would not allow them on the range. Most doctrine, even police training, remained focused on low crawls, ghillie suits and fieldwork—controversial at the time in the police marksman world. Thankfully that has changed, but it's important for snipers to be able to use what they can. Much of my early training revolved around using various bags, packs and other means to support our rifles. In essence, it's a fantastic way to work in the field, and it keeps your rifle lightweight and clean.

— Continued on page 129

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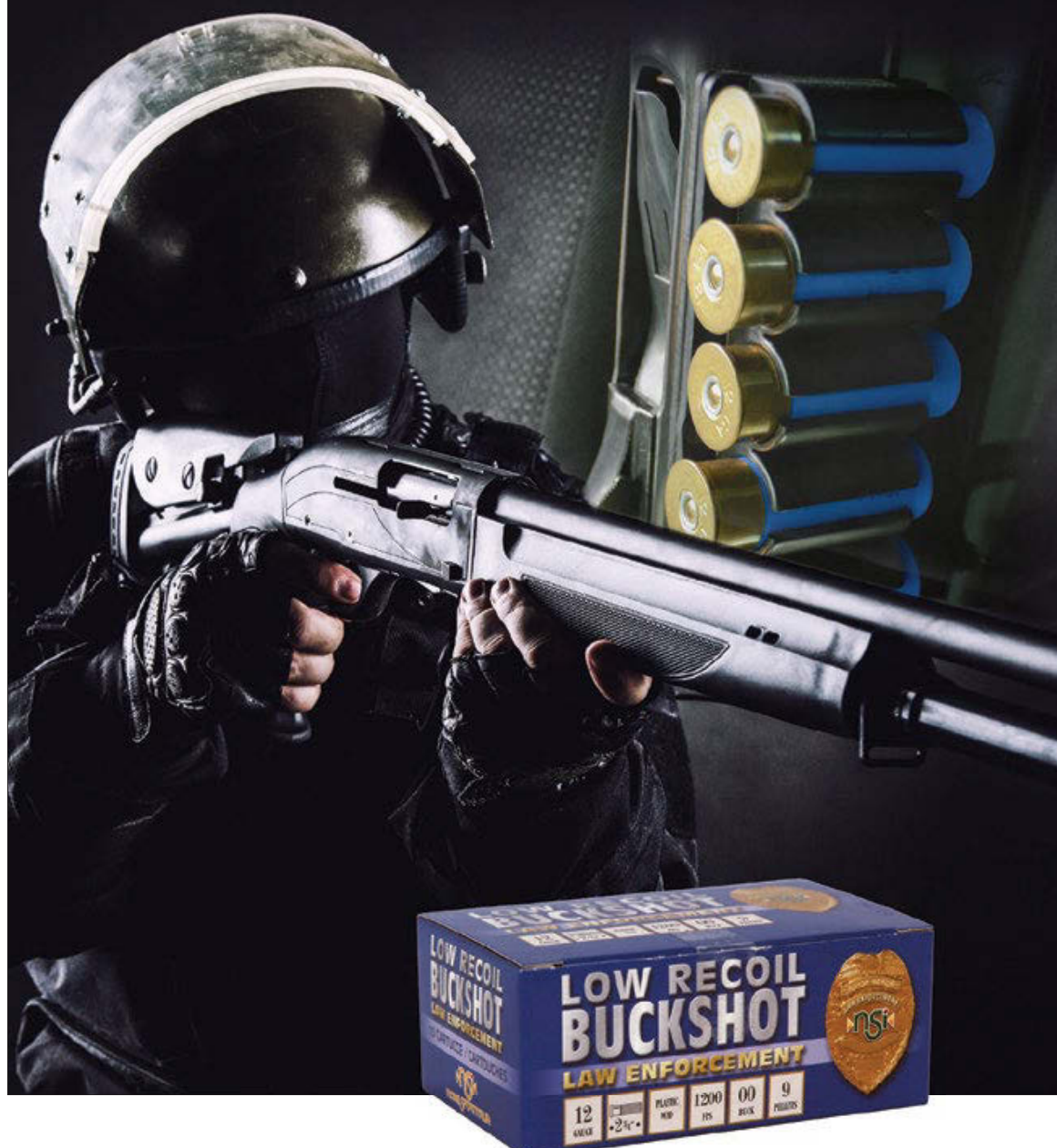


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ANS124BK10	12	2 3/4"	1325	4	27
ANS12MD10	12	2 3/4"	1300	MULTI*	7

* Multi = .650 round ball, 6X1BK

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VETS HELPING VETS

America's returning warriors can find solace and a future with GallantFew and the Elk Institute!

BY JOHN M. BUOL JR.



Imagine working a job that had you passing a sign on your daily commute warning of the potential for your imminent, violent death. A job where, on any given day, locals were actively trying to kill you. Improvised explosive devices (IEDs) were a normal part of the day, and you were personally struck by them multiple times. How about a job where calling for "MedFlight" transportation was a common, almost routine, occurrence? What effect would that have on your day-to-day wellbeing when repeated for nearly two years? What impact would it have on you even after the job was done?

Staff Sgt. David Lahmann served as a squad leader of a 1/133rd Infantry, 34th Infantry Division brigade combat team (BCT) for 22 months. His unit's deployment is acknowledged as the longest-deployed BCT in a single, ongoing tour of any United States unit of the entire Iraq War.

"Every day we left our FOB [Forward Operating Base], we passed several signs reading, 'Is today your day? Complacency kills' in bold, black stenciled letters. It was an effective message, but given the amount of IEDs, being reminded of imminent death took its toll. We rolled outside the wire weekly and would be gone for at least three continuous days at a time. IEDs were a constant threat. My squad wrecked over a dozen vehicles in IED attacks. I was personally in a vehicle destroyed in two of those attacks by IEDs. Our unit ended up calling for a MEDEVAC on nearly every mission. The lowest-ranking soldier in my squad called in a 'Nine Line' at least a half dozen times. A number of us had called them in so often that we had the full report procedure memorized."

Despite a lack of obvious, visible scars, mental trauma is a real injury. Staff Sgt. Lahmann has MRI scans showing the bulged discs from multiple back injuries, audio screenings documenting hearing loss, and has received multiple cortisone injections for shoulder injuries—all sustained during combat operations. However, there is no "scan" showing what impact working in a violent, dangerous

environment 24 hours a day for nearly two years straight has on a person's wellbeing. Often, the symptoms won't manifest until much later. While there is no cure, a supportive environment among fellow veterans—people who truly know how they feel—is extremely helpful. On top of all this is the transition from military life to a civilian career. Even without physical or mental trauma, it can be extremely difficult to transition from military to civilian life.

ANSWERING THE CALL

GallantFew is a non-profit organization founded in July 2010 that helps veterans transition from active military service to



A sign at the exit of a Forward Operating Base in Iraq reminded soldiers of the danger they'd have to face every day.

a civilian life. Founded by Karl Monger, a former Ranger who served with the 1/75 Ranger Battalion, the organization provides several support networks for veterans.

Its nationwide network of Ranger veterans now numbers over 4,000 globally. For example, the Darby Project, named after William Darby, the first commander of the 1st Ranger Battalion in 1942, directly targets U.S. Army Ranger veterans. GallantFew is looking for veterans outside of the Rangers (Army, Navy, Air Force) so that the organization can better serve those transitioning veterans with its concept.

The Descendants of Sparta focuses on anti-suicide outreach and law enforcement training, educating local police in de-escalation tactics to reduce the potential of violent interactions. GallantFew also has its Raider Project, which works with Marine combat troops and has plans to expand those directed efforts in the future.

The GallantFew annual fundraising and awareness campaign, Run Ranger Run, has had great success. The organization receives no grants or government funding, but carries out all of its work through private donations.

The concept is a nationwide veteran mentor network that helps our returning heroes transition to civilian life with the help of fellow veterans. The core focus is one-on-one mentoring among veterans, with an ideal match being veterans living reasonably close, having served in the same branch and ideally with the same military occupational specialty (MOS), with similar assignments and deployments. With mentors and protégés sharing common experiences, a stronger bond is developed than from seeing a mandated therapist with no military experience.

GallantFew further seeks to reduce veteran unemployment and homelessness. Beyond locating an understanding peer to share time with, the organization seeks out veterans who have become successful in their post-military civilian careers, people who can mentor a returning military vet by helping them with their résumés and job interviews, providing network contacts, coaching them on service-disabled and veteran-owned small-business opportunities or learning the requirements of working within federal procurement.

New veterans who are about to leave the military can sign up with GallantFew by providing their service details. Seasoned veterans who have been out for a while and have successfully transitioned to civilian careers are placed with new veterans. Civilian profession specifics are less important than having a fellow service member who has navigated and successfully made the



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Compartment



GT-12H-K

10" Monolithic Free Floating KeyMod
Handguard



GT-12JK

Thin Profile Free Floating Quad Rail With
Removable Rails (12")



GT1326-K-12

12" Free Floating KeyMod Handguard
With Sectional Side/Bottom Rails



TANK9-223

AR-15 Cal Multi Port Steel
Compensator 1/2 X 28



CENT-223

AR-15 Centurion Flash
Hider, U.S. Made



GT750R

AR15 Aluminum Rail
Height Gas Block



QD-EGG-SWIVEL

AR-15 Endplate For QD Single
Point Sling Adapter With Swivel



K-3

3" Removable KeyMod
Accessory Rail



FLIP-K

Front Flip-Up Sight With Lock, Spring
Assisted (Handguard Height)



GT-9JK-E

9" Ultra Lightweight Thin KeyMod Free Floating
Handguard With Monolithic Top Rail



RFLIP-K

Rear A2 Style
Flip-Up Sight
With Lock,
Spring Assisted



SPA-223

AR-15 Spartan Flash
Hider, U.S. Made



CONE-FH

AR-15 Cone Flash Can



GEN2-SB15TUBEKIT-QD

AR-15 Gen 2 Buffer Tube Kit For Sig
Sauer Sb15 Stabilizing Brace, U.S. Made



AMBI-S

AR-15 Ambidextrous Safety



GT-2

AR-15 Heavy Buffer
(4.4 oz)



SOCOM2-EXT

AR-15 Gen 2 Fake Suppressor
1/2 X 28 (Extends Length 4")
U.S. Made



ARPISTUBE

AR-15 Pistol Buffer Tube Kit



G4 LATCH

Gen 4 Charging Handle
Latch



GT-7JK

7" Ultra Lightweight Thin Key Mod Free Floating
Handguard With Monolithic Top Rail
U.S. Made

GT-KC

KeyMod Rubber Insert Covers
(10 Pcs Kit)



GT750LS

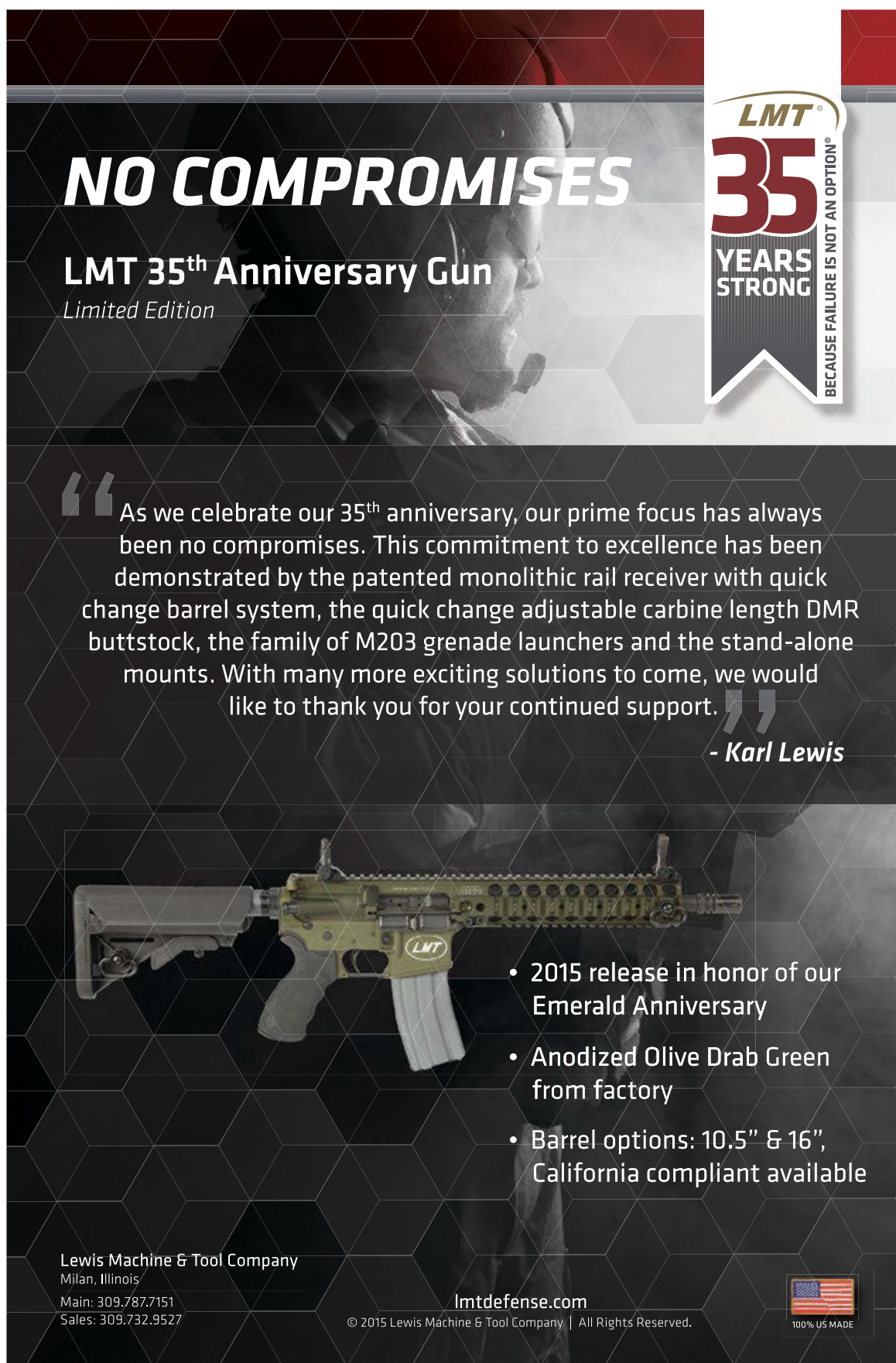
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Clamp On Gas Block



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transition. Mentors work with their protégé at least a few times each month with a focus on résumé preparation, job interviewing and networking. This also provides the returning service member a chance to talk with someone about civilian work life.

MEET THE GOOD DOCTOR

Sometimes the problem is bigger than needing a guiding hand. Chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) and traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) have come to light recently. Medical science has known about them for years, and despite being a condition affecting thousands of veterans, they only became publicly recognized due to high-profile sports celebrities.

Post-traumatic syndrome (PTS) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are forms of psychological trauma that have historically been labeled as “shellshock” or “battle fatigue.” There are differences in degrees and contexts, but basically, a traumatic experience continues to have a negative effect on a person’s psychological health, performance and overall wellbeing. Dr. Carrie Elk has been in the mental health field for over two decades, having earned multiple degrees in education, psychology, counseling and human science as well as certification as a trauma expert. She is a psychotherapist focused on military mental health and specializes in treating PTSD. She has researched methods that strive to eliminate triggers, not just decrease symptoms. Following the death of her father to cancer and her own diagnosis and successful treatment of the same, Dr. Elk joined with Military One Source to provide mental health treatments.

Dr. Elk served as a clinical services supervisor for Military One Source and later moved on as an investigator during initial studies of treatments for PTSD and TBI done at the University of South Florida College of Nursing. The USF’s grant from the Department of Defense to study PTSD required someone with military mental health experience, and Dr. Elk used her experience with Military One Source to lead the studies. Dr. Elk’s work has led to a number of patients no longer requiring prescription medication to manage their PTSD symptoms and instead has corrected traumatically stored memories so that they do not cause symptoms (triggers) for the veteran any longer.

Dr. Elk created courses on PTSD and other psychological trauma for a number of military and veteran organizations and served as a subject matter expert in the field for USSOCOM Joint Special Opera-



GallantFew helps support veterans with events including actors like Gary Sinise (left) and the Run Ranger Run fundraiser (right).

tions University and Care Coalition.

Dr. Elk took all the experience from her work with veterans/service members and founded her own non profit 501(c)(3) organization, the Elk Institute for Psychological Health and Performance, to provide training, treatment and research consultation on psychological trauma and other mental health topics for service members, veterans and organizations at no charge to the individual. The Elk Institute is an independent, civilian-run nonprofit that relies on donations to provide these confidential services. Dr. Elk tailored her approach based on what she had learned from veterans and service members: incorporating what they need and feel comfortable with and eliminating the barriers that keep them from getting help. Her approach does not require the client to disclose the traumatic

material, is short term, and the result is the elimination of triggers. The memory goes from being stored as a traumatic memory to instead being one that no longer reactivates the physiological response upon recall. An advisory board comprised of veterans, active-duty service members and mental health professionals guides the Elk Institute. Working in collaboration with other organizations like GallantFew, Dr. Elk and her colleagues have been able to reach many veterans in need worldwide.

A FULL RESPONSE

GallantFew finds former service members turned civilian professionals to mentor new veterans as they begin a transition to a new career and way of life. Rather than rely on the empty "I know how you feel" assurances from well-meaning counselors,

GallantFew helps cement a real bond of understanding by finding people that really have "been there, done that" in both the military and civilian sectors. Many times, simply having a mentor can help, and the Elk Institute's professionals also offer strong, research-based treatment options.

As Americans, we enjoy freedoms secured by others willing to do dangerous work on our behalf. We need to support our warriors, and organizations like GallantFew and the Elk Institute help veterans achieve the quality of life they deserve. **TW**

MORE WAYS TO HELP

GALLANTFEW
gallantfew.org; 817-567-3293

THE ELK INSTITUTE
elkinstitute.org

ELDER HEART, elderheart.org

MISSION 22, mission22.com

PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA (PVA)
pva.org; 800-424-8200

HONORED AMERICAN VETERANS AFIELD (HAVA), honoredveterans.org

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BY MIKE DETTY

TACTI-PISTOLS

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►►► **Years ago** I had taken an AR-15-style pistol on trade at a gun show. The owner was honest and told me up front that he couldn't get the pistol to cycle and just wanted to get rid of it for a fraction of what he had invested in it. I gave it a good inspection and could see that most

of its parts were of quality. Even if I couldn't get it to work I could sell the gun's parts and still make a decent profit. I brought it home and it sat in the corner of my workshop for years untouched until I learned of Sig Sauer's SB15. I ordered one immediately, and while I waited for it to be

delivered, I stripped my AR pistol down to its individual components. It was then I discovered a cracked gas tube that undoubtedly was the source of the gun's problems.

I reassembled the gun using a GuntecUSA low-profile gas block and a new gas tube. My rebuilt AR pistol has a 10.5-inch barrel, and I installed a free-floating handguard from GuntecUSA as well as the company's cone flash suppressor. I reassembled the gun's lower receiver using the new Tac-Con 3MR trigger. I also



AMERICAN TACTICAL OMNI HYBRID PISTOL

►► American Tactical's Omni Hybrid pistol uses a polymer lower with a patented zinc alloy reinforcing plate molded into the receiver at the rear takedown pinhole. The pistol

uses an aluminum upper receiver, and a free-floating, quad-rail handguard. It is offered without sights, with flip-up iron sights or with a red dot, hence the price differential (right). The Omni Hybrid "Maxx" pistol with a polymer upper with zinc alloy insert at the front pivot pin and barrel nut threading is also available. (americantactical.us; 800-290-0065)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	7.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	24 inches
WEIGHT:	4.75 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Polymer
SIGHTS:	None, flip-up BUIS or red dot
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$600-\$700



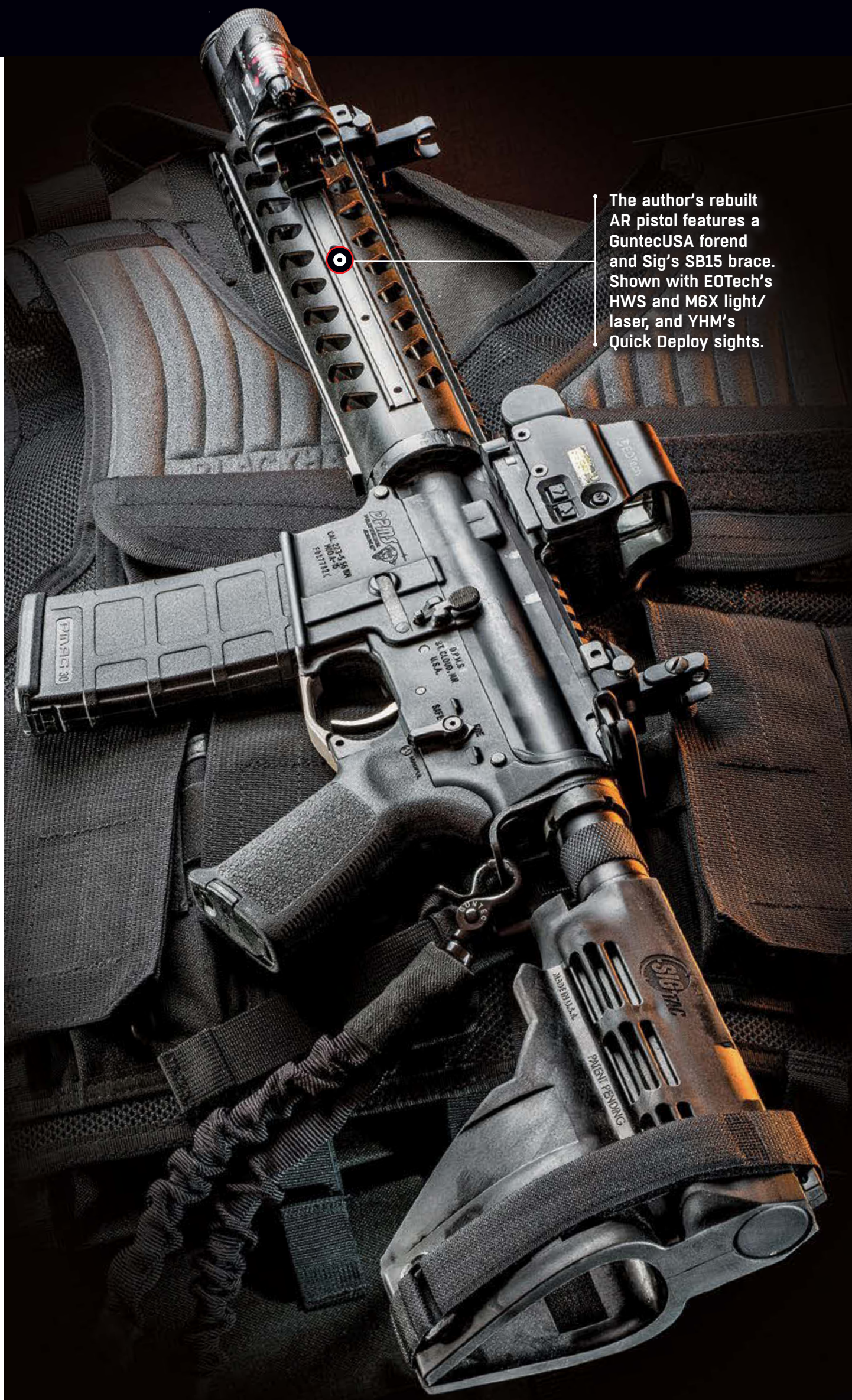
Armalite's M15P6 features a 6-inch barrel and a Law Tactical Gen 3 Folding Stock Adapter for an ultra-compact 5.56mm.

installed a Magpul MOE pistol grip and triggerguard as well as a TAPCO single-point sling mount end cap.

Once my SB15 arrived, I slid it into place. To round out my Frankenstein pistol build, I mounted a set of Yankee Hill Machine Quick Deploy sights, an LMT Tactical Latch charging handle and an EOTech holographic sight. On the left side rail I attached an EOTech M6X light and laser.

I fell in love with this new build the first time I shot it. I set out my targets at 50 yards and co-witnessed my EOTech and iron sights. My first three-shot sighting group measured less than 0.75 inches with generic ball ammo. It didn't surprise me that my build possessed this type of accuracy. What surprised me was that I was able to shoot so effectively with the SB15 stabilizing brace. The other thing I was pleasantly surprised by was the crisp precision of the Tac-Con 3MR trigger. It breaks at 4.5 pounds yet felt much lighter because of its short reset and crispness.

If you're not interested in actually building your own AR pistol, feast your eyes on the following AR-platform pistols on the market—some with the SB15 brace, some without.



The author's rebuilt AR pistol features a GuntecUSA forend and Sig's SB15 brace. Shown with EOTech's HWS and M6X light/laser, and YHM's Quick Deploy sights.



ARMALITE M15P6

» The Armalite M15P6 has the shortest barrel currently on any AR-15 pistol, a mere 6 inches, for an overall length of just 24 inches. At the rear of the pistol is a Law Tactical Gen 3 Folding Stock Adapter that allows the SB15 stabilizing brace to be folded, bringing the M-15P6 down to only 17 inches. The pistol's double-lapped, 1-in-7-inch-twist barrel is fitted with a compensator. The forged aluminum upper has a 12-inch top rail, an AXTS Raptor ambidextrous charging handle and a KeyMod handguard. The lower receiver features a Magpul MOE-K2 pistol grip, an ambidextrous safety and a two-stage trigger. (armalite.com; 800-336-0184)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	6 inches
OA LENGTH:	17-24 inches
WEIGHT:	6 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Magpul MOE-K2
SIGHTS:	Magpul MBUS
ACTION:	Direct-impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	20+1
MSRP:	\$1,999



BUSHMASTER PATROLMAN'S AR

» Bushmaster offers its Patrolman's AR pistol in a couple different configurations. All come with a 416 match-grade stainless steel barrel, and it can be had with a barrel length of 7 or 10.5 inches. Consumers have their choice of a round, aluminum, free-floating handguard or a Barnes Precision lightweight, free-floating, railed handguard. This latter model is called the Enhanced Patrolman, and these pistols also have the AAC three-pronged flash suppressor. (bushmaster.com; 800-883-6229)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	7 or 10.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	23.5-26.5 inches
WEIGHT:	4.9-5.7 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	A2 or Magpul MOE
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$973-\$1,229



CMMG MK4 & MK9 PISTOLS

» CMMG has just recently added three AR pistols to its lineup: the Mk4 K in 5.56mm NATO, the Mk9 PDW in 9mm and the Mk4 PDW in 300 Blackout. The Mk9 and Mk4 PDW feature CMMG's slim RKM7 free-floating KeyMod handguard, a Magpul MOE pistol grip and an ambidextrous rear sling mount. The 5.56mm and 300 BLK pistols come with a Magpul 30-round magazine. To take advantage of the 5.56mm's accuracy and velocity, CMMG outfits the Mk4 K with a 12.5-inch barrel. All three of these AR pistols are covered by CMMG's lifetime quality guarantee. (cmmginc.com; 660-248-2293)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	9mm, 5.56mm NATO, 300 BLK
BARREL:	8.2-12.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	24-28 inches
WEIGHT:	4.6-5.3 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Magpul MOE
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$1,050-\$1,100



DANIEL DEFENSE DDM4 300

» Daniel Defense recently dove into the AR-platform pistol market with its introduction of the DDM4 in 300 Blackout. The hard-hitting pistol comes complete with a 10.3-inch, chrome-moly, cold-hammer-forged barrel featuring Daniel Defense's new Strength-to-Weight (S2W) profile as well as a pistol-length gas system, a pinned low-profile gas block and the DDM4 Rail 9.0 handguard, which offers plenty of space for mounting accessories like lights and lasers. Also note the textured Daniel Defense pistol grip. (danieldefense.com; 866-554-4867)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	300 BLK
BARREL:	10.3 inches
OA LENGTH:	27.15 inches
WEIGHT:	5.3 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Polymer
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$1,699

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DIAMONDBACK DB15P

» Diamondback Firearms, a relative newcomer in the world of AR manufacturers, produces the DB15 pistol series. Outfitted with 7.5-inch, chrome-moly barrels, flattop upper receivers and free-floating, railed handguards, the DB15Ps vary in color and furniture options. Each is fitted with Diamondback's distinctive Edge flash suppressor. The DB15PFDE7 (shown) features a deluxe Flat Dark Earth finish that is durable and attractive and contrasts the black controls and grip. (diamondbackfirearms.com; 877-997-6774)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	7.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	24 inches
WEIGHT:	6 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Polymer
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black, OD green, FDE
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$899-\$914



DOUBLESTAR AR PISTOL

» DoubleStar produces AR pistols in three different barrel lengths—7.5, 10.5 and 11.5 inches—and chambered in 5.56mm NATO and 300 BLK. All use Eugene Stoner's battle-proven direct gas impingement system for operation. There are a variety of options available in each barrel length, from flattop receivers and chrome-lined barrels to quad-rail handguards and enhanced flash suppressors. The 7.5-inch-barreled model features a round handguard and a Picatinny rail gas block for a front sight. (star15.com; 888-736-7725)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO, 300 BLK
BARREL:	7.5, 10.5 or 11.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	23.5-27.5 inches
WEIGHT:	4.7-5.7 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Polymer
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$1,284-\$1,407



MASTERPIECE ARMS MPAR556-P

» This megapistol looks like a cross between an AR and an AK pistol, but it is neither—although it's chambered in 5.56mm NATO. It uses AR magazines and an AR pistol grip, but the operating system is different (it use a short-stroke piston), and it has other features that some believe are superior, including a side-mounted charging handle with a large knob for faster reloading. Also note the handguard, which allows users to mount Picatinny accessory rails where needed. (masterpiecearms.com; 770-832-9430)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	10 inches
OA LENGTH:	21 inches
WEIGHT:	7 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	A2 synthetic
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Short-stroke gas piston, semi-auto
FINISH:	Black phosphate
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$877

MOSSBERG 715P



» Some AR-platform pistols, like the Mossberg 715P, are chambered in the economical .22 LR rimfire cartridge, making them a lot less expensive to shoot. But even though the Mossberg 715P fires a round that is not generally accepted as a self-defense cartridge, it can be used as a handy training or all-out fun gun. (mossberg.com; 800-323-3555)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	.22 LR
BARREL:	6 inches
OA LENGTH:	16 inches
WEIGHT:	3 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Synthetic, black or camo
SIGHTS:	Adjustable front and rear; optional red dot
ACTION:	Blowback, semi-auto
FINISH:	Blued
CAPACITY:	10+1, 25+1
MSRP:	\$308-\$447

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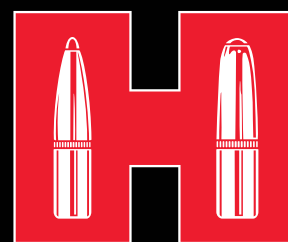
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POF-USA P415 PISTOL

» Patriot Ordnance Factory, or POF-USA, known primarily for its innovative piston-driven line of 5.56mm and 7.62mm rifles, also offers pistols chambered in 5.56mm with 7.25-inch barrels. Like their rifle counterparts, the POF-USA pistols use the same short-stroke piston system. The pistols also feature the company's free-floating Modular Railed Receiver (MRR) handguard. Unlike most manufacturers, POF-USA pistols work fine using cheaper, steel-cased ammo as long as the chamber is cleaned periodically. These guns also feature POF-USA's patented E² extraction system. (pof-usa.com; 623-561-9572)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	7.25 inches
OA LENGTH:	23.5 inches
WEIGHT:	5.7 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Magpul MOE
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Piston-operated semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black or NP3
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$2,129-\$2,159



PRIMARY WEAPONS SYSTEMS MK107P

» The MK107P looks more like a traditional AR-style pistol, but inside it has some unique features, including a .223 Wylde chamber. The gun does away with the AR-15 direct gas impingement system and substitutes a long-stroke piston system similar to that used in the AK-47 for enhanced reliability. The MK107P also comes with PWS' Triad flash suppressor, Magpul's MBUS sights and MOE grip, and an SB15. (208-344-5217; primaryweapons.com)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	.223 Wylde
BARREL:	7.75 inches
OA LENGTH:	23.75 inches
WEIGHT:	5.25 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Magpul MOE
SIGHTS:	Magpul MBUS
ACTION:	Piston-operated semi-auto
FINISH:	Hardcoat Type III anodization
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$1,950



ROCK RIVER ARMS LAR PISTOLS

» Rock River Arms offers AR pistols in both 7- and 10.5-inch-barreled flattop configurations. Users have a variety of options to select from, including A2 uppers, chromed bolt carriers, free-floating rail systems and much more. Both guns come equipped with Hogue rubber pistol grips for enhanced control. Rock River Arms also offers 9mm pistols with either 7- or 10.5-inch barrel lengths with many of the same options. The 10.5-inch-barreled A4 model (shown) comes with M4-style handguards. (rockriverarms.com; 866-980-7625)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	9mm, 5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	7 or 10.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	23-26.5 inches
WEIGHT:	5-5.2 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Hogue
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$1,055-\$1,205



SIG SAUER P516

» The P516 is available with either a 7.5- or 10-inch barrel. This model uses a gas piston design and has a four-position gas regulator, allowing you to tune the rifle for your ammunition, conditions and sound suppressor use. Chambered in 5.56mm NATO, the military-grade barrel features a standard A2-style flash suppressor and is surrounded by a railed, free-floating handguard. Sig Sauer also outfits this pistol with its SB15 brace and flip-up front and rear sights for quick targeting. (sigsauer.com; 603-610-3000)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	7.5 or 10 inches
OA LENGTH:	24-26.5 inches
WEIGHT:	6-6.5 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Polymer
SIGHTS:	Flip-up front and rear
ACTION:	Piston-operated semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$1,754

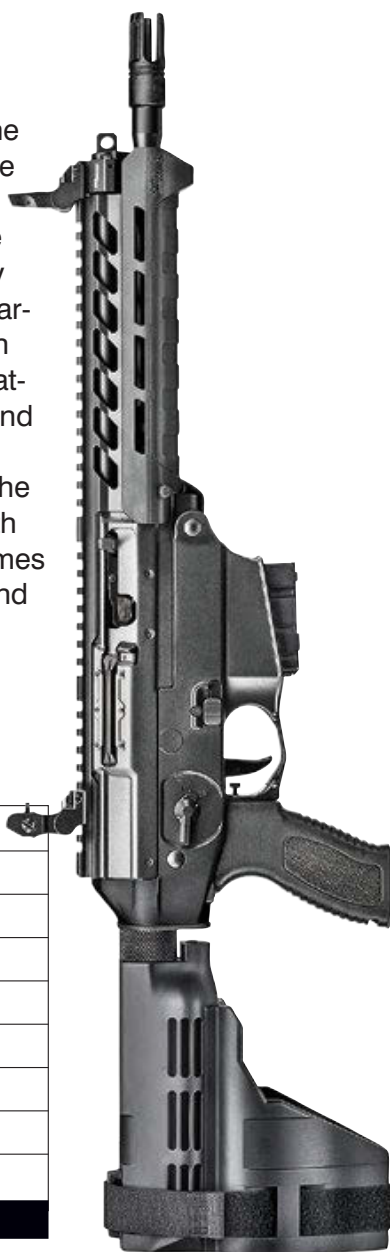


SIG SAUER 556xi

» Sig Sauer has begun offering the new SIG556xi series, a complete redesign of its SIG556 platform. Featuring a three-position-adjustable gas piston system, users can quickly change out the SIG556xi's caliber, barrel, bolt, handguard and stock to turn one gun into many. Currently, the platform supports both 5.56mm NATO and 7.62x39mm chamberings. Sig Sauer offers three SIG556xi base models: the standard, the Russian and a third with the SB15 stabilizing brace, which comes with a 10-inch barrel, a modular forend and flip-up front and rear sights for SIG556xi's long Picatinny top rail. (sigsauer.com; 603-610-3000)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO, 7.62x39
BARREL:	10 inches
OA LENGTH:	28.2 inches
WEIGHT:	7 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Polymer
SIGHTS:	Flip-up front and rear
ACTION:	Piston-operated semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	10+1, 30+1
MSRP:	N/A



YHM-15 9MM PISTOL

» Yankee Hill Machine (YHM) is now offering a blowback-operated YHM-15 pistol in 9mm with a threaded, 5.5-inch-long barrel. This AR-platform pistol starts with forged 7075-T6 aluminum upper and lower receivers held together with YHM's EZ Pull takedown pins. YHM's aluminum KR7 Series Mini Handguard (YHM-5315) features an extended top Picatinny rail for sights and KeyMod slots at every 45 degrees for mounting additional accessories. The 9mm YHM-15 also comes with a metal 32-round magazine and a Phantom flash suppressor. The company also offers a 5.56mm YHM-15. (yhm.net; 877-892-6533) 

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	9mm
BARREL:	5.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	20.5 inches
WEIGHT:	5.04 pounds (empty)
GRIP:	Polymer
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Blowback semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	32+1
MSRP:	\$1,557



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STOCK EXCHANGE



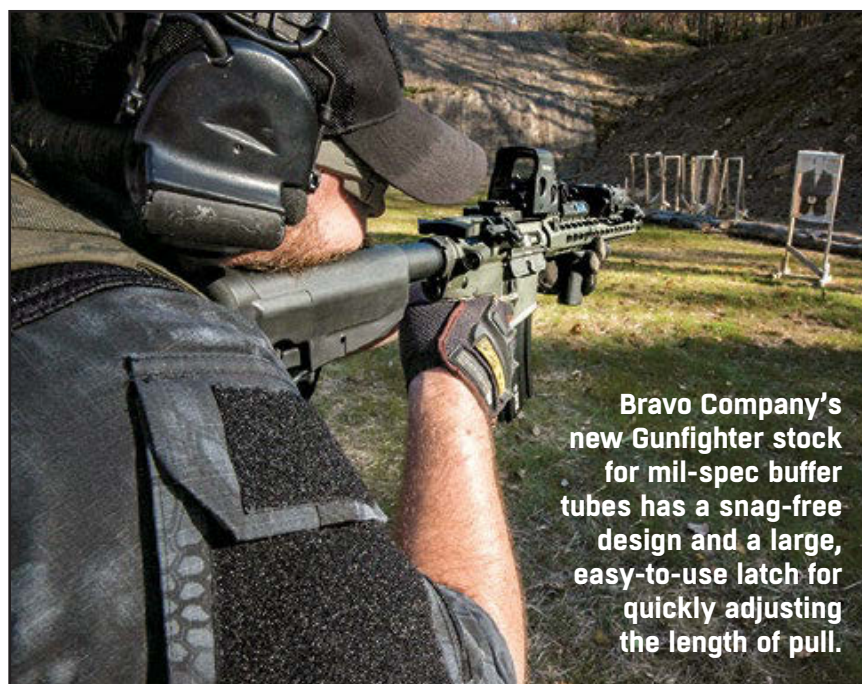
***Invest in tactical performance
with these top-notch aftermarket AR upgrades!***

BY ROBERT A. SADOWSKI

AR STOCK DESIGNS have come a long way since the original, old-school M16A2 fixed stock. If you're a smaller-statured shooter or need to wear a lot of clothing/gear, consider a collapsible stock. A fixed stock might make sense if you're shooting at longer distances and have the time to settle in for a long shot and do not require extra maneuverability. Remember that the lower receiver is the part of the AR-platform rifle regulated and considered the firearm by federal law. When making modifications, make sure they abide your state and local laws.

ACE HAMMER

The Hammer (HMR) stock from Ace Ltd. is touted as the world's strongest AR stock. It is machined from heat-treated, aircraft-grade aluminum and is tough and rugged while being completely user adjustable. The seven length-of-pull positions are laser-etched onto the main tube. The tube uses a spring-loaded ball bearing to ensure collapsing and expanding the



Photos Courtesy of Manufacturers

Bravo Company's new Gunfighter stock for mil-spec buffer tubes has a snag-free design and a large, easy-to-use latch for quickly adjusting the length of pull.

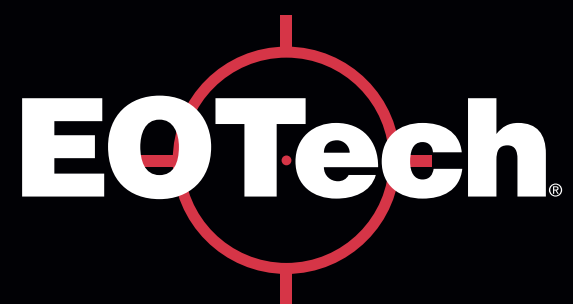
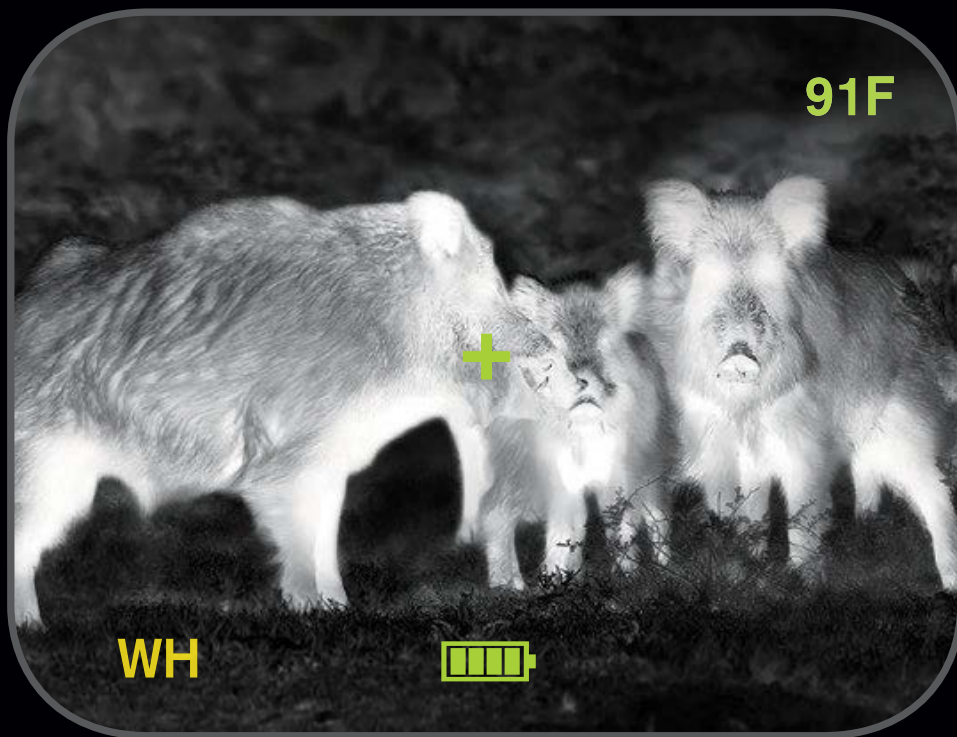
stock is smooth and effortless. The cheekpiece of the Hammer stock is also adjustable for height so a user can customize it to their stature and optic. (riflestocks.com; 888-736-7725)

ATI TACTLITE

The new TactLite AR-15 stock from Advanced Technology International (ATI) is one of the lightest AR-15 stocks on the market, weighing in at roughly 5.85 ounces. The TactLite (see photo next page) stock also boasts an industry-first constant inner diameter throughout the length of the stock, with versions available for both military and commercial-spec rifles. This innovative design feature reduces any movement of the buffer tube in the stock system. The buffer tube is also fixed between a slide mechanism comprised of a material with an extremely low friction coefficient, which provides a secure and tight fit with minimal resistance. The six-position-adjustable stock also features a new slim, lightweight version of ATI's Scorpion Recoil Pad, as well as a (QD) sling mount and slot. (atigunstocks.com; 800-925-2522)



ACE HAMMER



U N M I S T A K A B L E



ATI TACTLITE

ERGO F93 PRO

FAB
DEFENSE
GL-MAGHOGUE
OVERMOLDED
COLLAPSIBLE

DPMS PARDUS

BCM GUNFIGHTER

The new BCM Gunfighter stock is an improvement on the M4 units BCM currently sells. Featuring a streamlined, snag-free design, this new stock still fits all mil-spec-sized buffer tubes and doesn't need the additional external tension adjustment that other units do. A large adjustment latch runs over half the length of the underside, making adjustments easy. BCM patented the internals, with the main locking piece made from a heat-treated steel alloy, as compared to the more typical single pin found in other adjustable stocks. (bravocompanymfg.com; 877-272-8626)

DPMS PARDUS

DPMS' Pardus collapsible AR stock is constructed of lightweight, fiber-reinforced Zytel polymer and comes in an all-business black finish. Unlike other AR buttplates, the Pardus buttplate is curved and has a saw-tooth texture so it will stay tucked into a user's shoulder pocket. A Monte Carlo-style cheekrest offers more shooting comfort. Four integrated slots allow numerous sling attachment options. Users can adjust the length of pull via an ergonomic latch that has built-in finger grooves. (dpmsinc.com; 888-736-7725)

ERGO F93 PRO

The eight-position F93 collapsible stock has one of the longest length-of-pull adjustment ranges available. It is 8 inches from receiver to buttplate when collapsed and 12 inches when fully extended. The cheekpiece is fixed to eliminate rattle and provide a constant and repeatable cheekweld. The stock offers two quick-detach sling attachment points and three sling-attachment slots. Available in black, Flat Dark Earth, OD green and black/tan. (ergogrips.net; 888-736-7725)

FAB DEFENSE GL-MAG

The FAB Defense GL-MAG M4/AR-15 survival buttstock has a magazine carrier built in. The sleek stock design is snag free and fully adjustable for length of pull yet offers the convenience of a magazine carrier that can hold standard-sized M4 magazines. It is made of high-grade polymer that's durable, reliable and lightweight. The ergonomic design uses a quick-release button that allows an operator to keep the carbine shouldered during a magazine change. (themakogroup.com)

HOGUE OVERMOLDED COLLAPSIBLE

The Hogue OverMolded Collapsible buttstock for AR-platform rifles has options to fit both mil-spec and commercial-sized buffer tubes. Its reinforced-polymer construction features an OverMolded rubber cheekpiece, and the rubber/polymer



**LARUE
TACTICAL RAT**

MAGPUL ACS

hybrid buttpad provides for snag-free shouldering. It uses a rubber friction fit so it does not move or rattle. Multiple swivel sleeve and sling mounting locations are built in. It is available in seven different colors. (hogueinc.com; 800-438-4747)

LARUE TACTICAL RAT

The RAT buttstock from LaRue Tactical has a two-stage trigger mechanism that allows a user to adjust the length of pull while in a variety of shooting positions. The six length-of-pull adjustments are smooth and easy to make. The outside of the stock is made of glass-filled polymer. It features ambidextrous sling swivel sockets and integrated 1-inch slots for numerous sling attachment options. The locking buttplate of the RAT stock also slides open to expose an internal compartment. (larue.com; 512-259-1585)

MAGPUL ACS

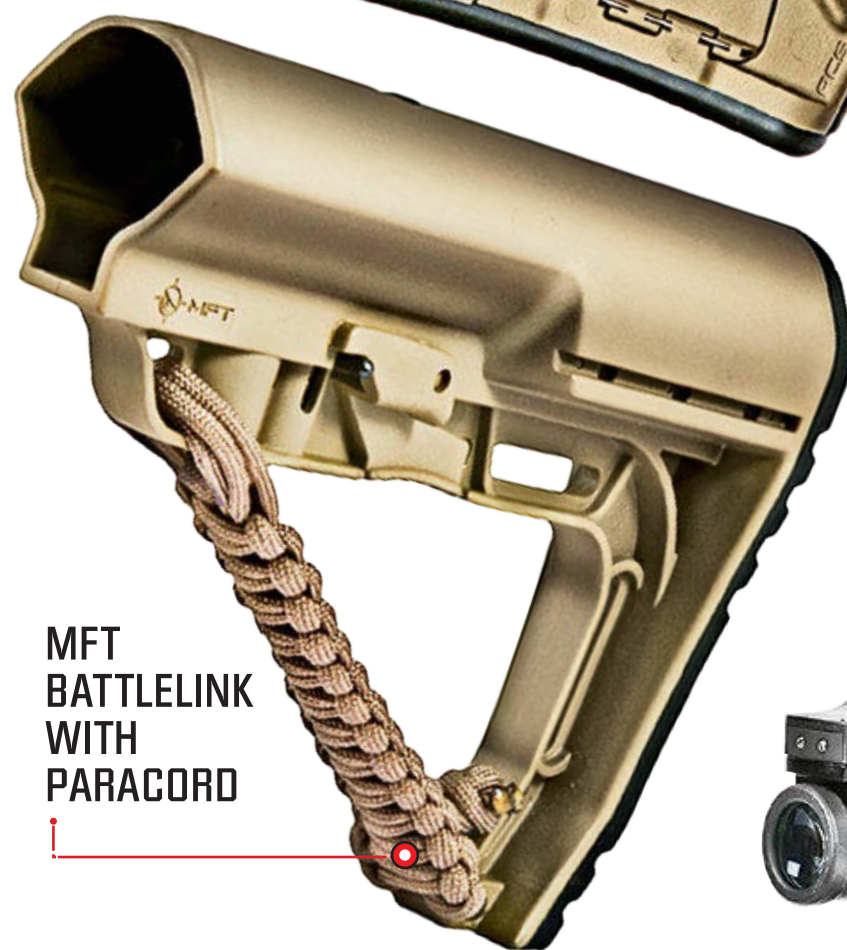
The ACS (Adaptable Carbine/Storage) stock is a simple drop-in replacement that can enhance the ubiquitous AR carbine's performance. The stock is designed to be snag-free, so it won't catch on gear or your environment. The sloping cheek-piece offers a wide contact surface for a better cheekweld. Two water-resistant compartments are located on the left and right sides of the stock. The ACS features a friction-lock system that minimizes excessive stock movement. It mounts on any mil-spec tube. (magpul.com; 877-462-4785)

MFT BATTLELINK MINIMALIST WITH PARACORD

The BMSNRAT and BMSMILNRA BattleLink Minimalist stocks from Mission First Tactical (MFT) include paracord to make the stock snag-free. Braided paracord spans from the toe of the buttpad to the forward-most sling attachment. The paracord can also be removed and used in emergency situations. The Minimalist is constructed of a tough, lightweight polymer with an angled, non-slip, rubberized buttpad that can be easily and comfortably used with and without body armor. (missionfirsttactical.com; 267-704-0001)

TACSTAR AMRS

If match-grade accuracy is a requirement, then the TacStar AMRS (Adjustable Match Rifle Stock) is a good choice for a stock upgrade. The AMRS is compatible with A2 buffer tubes. The comb height and the length of pull can be adjusted for a custom fit. A hidden Picatinny rail allows users to attach a monopod. Quick-release sling swivel ports are built into the stock as well as numerous fixed slots for attaching a sling. (tacstar.com; 800-225-9626) 



**MFT
BATTLELINK
WITH
PARACORD**



TACSTAR AMRS



Ready to reign supreme at any range, the powerful new XCaliber redefines bolt-action .50 BMG precision with several built-in upgrades, including its McMillan action, Lilja barrel, Shilen trigger and Cadex Strike Gen IV chassis, that help it remain sub-MOA accurate beyond 700 yards. Shown with a U.S. Optics 5-25X ER-25.



KING'S

Bolt action brings .50 BMG power and sub-MOA precision out to 1,200 yards!

BY FRED MASTISON
PHOTOS BY STRAIGHT 8

~~The massive bolt slides forward and firmly locks down. Wind is almost nonexistent as the trigger is gently taken in.~~ The press is followed by a bone-shaking report; 1.53 seconds and 1,200 yards later, steel rings and twists on the chains from which it hangs. It is range test time behind the new King's Arsenal XKaliber .50 BMG bolt rifle, and we are just warming up.

The journey to this moment began during a meeting with Jordan King of King's Arsenal during an industry trade show early in 2014. Several respected shooters in the industry had spoken

highly of his work, and it was an opportunity to see things in person. After a good conversation, the big question had to be asked: Why? A .50 BMG bolt gun is not exactly something found in every gun safe across America. It is a very specific weapon appealing to a specific crowd. The answer was pretty straightforward: The military has a need for this rifle. The battlefield has changed, and long-range engagements have become a common occurrence. If we are able to stop a threat at an extreme distance, then they never get close enough to harm a member of our military or those of our allies. The challenge faced by using a common .50 BMG platform is accuracy. However, the XKaliber is a game changer on many fronts, especially when it comes to accuracy.

KING'S ARSENAL

The .50 BMG in a rifle configuration has been an important and appreciated part of the military world for years. The .50 BMG round is beloved for its ability to decimate an engine block and bring vehicles to a standstill. On a higher level, the .50 BMG has been used against enemy personnel when possible, but accuracy has been a challenge. This is where the XKaliber changes everything. With a 1-MOA accuracy guarantee, the XKaliber allows the .50 BMG to move from a general anti-materiel weapon to a reliable and hyper-accurate sniper rifle. With rare exception, the .50 BMG has never officially made the cut as a sniper rifle. The baseline has been that the rifle must shoot 1 MOA consistently. The XKaliber can meet this standard all day long.

KING OF THE FUTURE

The XKaliber is more than an odd collection of big gun parts welded together to make a boom-stick. It is a very well thought out and designed weapon. Starting with the new McMillan action, the gun leaves the blocks ahead of any competition. The McMillan action is popular for serious benchrest shooters and is renowned for its reliability. It's created from 4340 chrome-moly steel that is then treated for exceptional hardness. This is also the action linked to one of the longest recorded sniper shots. Master Corporal Rob Furlong of the Canadian Army is credited with a confirmed hit at 2,647 yards—over 1.5 miles.

The bolt is the brainchild of Jordan King, and it's as much a piece of art as it is a functional component. Fluted and smooth as glass, the bolt is the perfect mate for the McMillan action. With a solid lock-up and turn, the bolt is truly "one" with the action.

The 28-inch barrel comes from the good folks at Lilja. It has a 1-in-15-inch twist rate that is a perfect match for Hornady's 750-grain A-MAX round. The muzzle brake is



The McMillan muzzle brake, attached to the 28-inch Lilja barrel, works in conjunction with the easy-to-adapt chassis and its thick rubber buttstock to help reduce some of the .50 BMG recoil.

also from McMillan, and it's standard on its guns as well. The brake is a good fit, and it adds sufficient control without adding too much weight to the front of the gun.

Shilen was chosen for the rifle's trigger. It's tuned in the shop for a very crisp 2.38-pound pull. Not for the faint of heart, the trigger has no slop or play. It is all business, and it's a good reminder to keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.

Holding all of this magic together is a Cadex Strike Gen IV chassis. In fact, the chassis for this gun did not exist until King's Arsenal made the push. The lightweight, skeletonized stock does a fine job of mixing strength with weight management. It is a highly modular stock and can be adjusted to the shooter at many points. All of the adjustments can be done without the need for tools, which is important in the field. You can make adjustments and then simply lock them in place. There's no wiggle or play at all. The most unique part



The unique modular chassis allows the XKaliber to be carried in places traditional .50 BMG weapons cannot. The buttstock folds to the right side, with the charging handle locking into a cutout.

PERFORMANCE

KING'S ARSENAL XKALIBER

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY		
		500 YDS	600 YDS	700 YDS
Barrett 661 FMJ	2,750	3.00	6.50	7.25
Hornady 750 A-MAX	2,820	2.75	5.25	7.50
Patriot Munitions 750	2,800	3.00	6.25	7.75

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for five-shot groups at 500, 600 and 700 yards.

of the chassis is the side-folding buttstock. It folds to the right side of the gun, and the bolt handle locks into a cutout in the buttstock. This is a solid plus for anyone packing a bolt gun any distance. In the past you had to make a decision: What will dig into your back? Will it be the bolt knob or the edge of the folded stock? This design solves that problem and makes the gun easier to carry.

The rifle is a compact 45 inches long with the stock folded and a manageable 56 inches with the stock unfolded. Coming in at 25 pounds unloaded and without a scope, it is a heavy blaster. It is most comparable in size and weight to Barrett's 23-pound, 5+1 Model 95. It is safe to say that the XKaliber is one of the lightest bolt-action .50s on the market.

ROUNDS DOWNRANGE

Testing this rifle was pretty straightforward. The focus would be on accuracy obviously, but more importantly its overall function and ability to engage targets consistently and at pace. Trying to avoid a boring benchrest test, we would look at applications in the real world. With steel silhouette targets, we would focus on "minute of man" as opposed to minute of angle. The rifle arrived from King's Arsenal just as it would be sent to any end-user. Because I wanted to shoot the gun at serious distances, I chose a U.S. Optics 5-25X ER-25 scope with a Horus H59 reticle. Now the XKaliber was ready for some distance. Our ammo included loads from Barrett, Hornady and Patriot Munitions.

Our base distance was 500 yards simply because it would be almost an insult to



PHASE 5

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KING'S ARSENAL .50

SPEC BOX

KING'S ARSENAL XKALIBER	
CALIBER:	.50 BMG
BARREL:	28 inches
OA LENGTH:	45-56 inches
WEIGHT:	25 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Cadex Strike Gen IV chassis
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Bolt
FINISH:	Kryptek Cerakote
CAPACITY:	5+1
MSRP:	\$13,900

shoot this rifle at anything less. After a brief sighting in, the rounds began to fly. While the goal was getting rounds on steel while shooting at pace, I quickly began to see a pattern emerging. Every round was punishing the same point on the steel. With only minor shifts, the bullet strikes created a small grey, center-mass zone on the steel. This continued as we ran farther and farther back. User error cost a few out-of-zone rounds, but even at the max distance we had available that day—1,200 yards—the steel was still ringing consistently.

The ease of operation that this big-bore heavy hitter provided made testing a pleasure. The entire gun was solid and easy to run. While undeniably pushy, the .50 BMG rounds were easy to manage with the stock adjusted properly. The brake on the rifle worked well, as we experienced minimal push while using a Hog Saddle and bipod. Pausing just long enough to reload the detachable box magazine and relocate, the testing period flew by.

BATTLEFIELD READY

What became very evident was that this rifle has a place in the hands of military professionals. Its modularity in terms of length of pull and cheek height allows it to be customized to any shooter. More than anything, the exceptional accuracy that the rifle provides makes it an exceptional asset when the need to engage at extreme distance arises. While hyper accurate with the test ammo, it is capable of firing the spectrum of military specialties as well. From armor piercing to incendiary ammo, this rifle can launch a variety of rounds, making it utilitarian—one rifle for both anti-materiel and anti-personnel missions. From destroying crew-served weapons to the enemies running those weapons, this is the gun to get it done. The name of this rifle seems fitting, as it truly is the weapon of kings. For more information, visit kingsarsenal.com or call 325-669-5064. 

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Robert T. Briskey, Battle Hen Armory

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HARDCORE PROTECTION

A look at how Saint-Gobain's synthetic sapphires are deployed to protect HIMARS crewmen.

BY JACK SATTERFIELD

In their natural state, sapphires are globally recognized as beautiful, lustrous precious stones, often brilliantly blue, used in expensive jewelry. In fact, the remarkable colors in sapphires are evidence of impurities in the aluminum oxide crystals that form the stones. Pure sapphire, like the best diamonds, is clear as glass.

Clear sapphire is never found in nature, but it can be produced synthetically. Although the manufacturing process is complex, synthetic sapphires have many important applications because they are very hard, chemically inert and virtually impervious to damage. "Synthetic sapphires, made from aluminum oxide, have a lot of unique characteristics that make them a great choice for applications in military and other markets requiring exceptionally hard material," explained Russ Wooddell, program manager at Saint-Gobain Crystals in Milford, New Hampshire. "Only diamond is harder than sapphire. If you want to cut it, you have to use either sapphire or diamond. Because it's so hard, a single sheet of sapphire ceramic makes great transparent armor, replacing several layers of glass in a typical solution, with less than half the weight and no reduction in ballistic protection."

MISSILE LAUNCHERS

Wooddell and his team are responsible for producing the bulletproof windows being retrofitted in the U.S. Army's M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS). In service since 2005, the HIMARS is the mobile version of the Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS), with a six-rocket launcher or a single Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) missile towed by the Army's Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles (FMTV) 5-ton truck. HIMARS can be transported in a

C-130 cargo aircraft, and it can deploy into areas previously inaccessible to heavier launchers, including Iraq and Afghanistan, where the system was utilized effectively in combat for the first time.

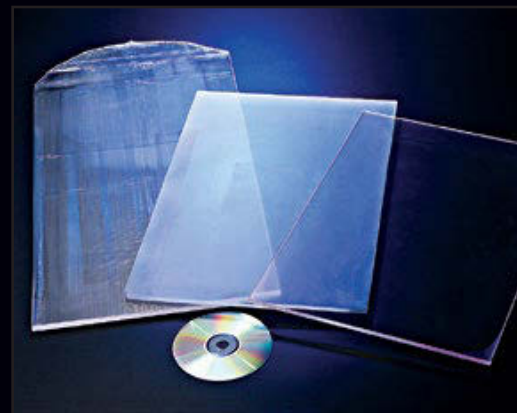
Because the HIMARS operating crew rides in the cab of the FMTV truck, they are obvious targets for enemy sharpshooters bent on neutralizing the missile system by neutralizing the people who fire them and operate the system. Providing ballistic protection for the crews is critical, and synthetic sapphire is a significant improvement over conventional bulletproof glass.

The task of providing this important upgrade fell to Saint-Gobain Crystals, a

division of Saint-Gobain, a French multinational corporation specializing in construction and high-performance materials. Its extensive operations in North America include the Crystals Division, focused on the design and production of crystal-based technology for radiation detection, optics and sapphire components for semiconductors and other industrial, aerospace and defense applications.

COMPLEX CRAFTING

Synthetic sapphire production, especially in the sizes required for vehicle windows, is remarkably complex. After decades of independent research and



The Army's HIMARS (left) are being retrofitted with windows of pure sapphire (bottom right) that can withstand several hits from a Dragunov, for example, without giving way (top right).

development, Saint-Gobain in Milford originated the breakthrough manufacturing techniques that lead the industry and enabled the material's use as transparent armor for the first time. In addition to the HIMARS production program, Saint-Gobain also supplies sapphire windows for the Electro-Optical Targeting System (EOTS) used in the Joint Strike Fighter program, the new combat aircraft in development for the U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps. The company's expertise led in October 2012 to a three-year, \$20 million contract to provide enough replacement windows for 540 HIMARS vehicles in service in the U.S. Army, Army National Guard and Marine Corps. Saint-Gobain marked delivery of the 1,500th set of armor windows for the rocket system in February 2015. Appropriately, the first recipient of the new window retrofit, delivered earlier, was in the Milford plant's

“Synthetic sapphires have many important applications because they are very hard, chemically inert and virtually impervious to damage.”

home state, a rocket system unit serving with the New Hampshire National Guard based in Nashua.

Wooddell's team produces 1-by-2-foot sapphire sheets. While this doesn't seem impressive, it's worth noting that they are the largest in the world. Complex manufacturing techniques make production of sapphire sheets of more than a few square inches exceptionally difficult, and producing large sheets in high volumes is exponentially more difficult.

“We grow synthetic sapphire with a technique known as Edge-defined Film-fed Growth (EFG). It's truly impressive to watch, even for those of us who have witnessed it many times,” said Wooddell. “To produce the sheets, we fill a crucible, a container that can withstand very high temperatures, with molten aluminum oxide. The liquid is about 2,000 degrees Celsius, or 3,700 degrees Fahrenheit.

“A die about 12 inches wide, used to shape the sapphire, is placed in the crucible, and it mimics the thickness of sapphire crystal,” Wooddell continued. “As the molten aluminum oxide pools at the top

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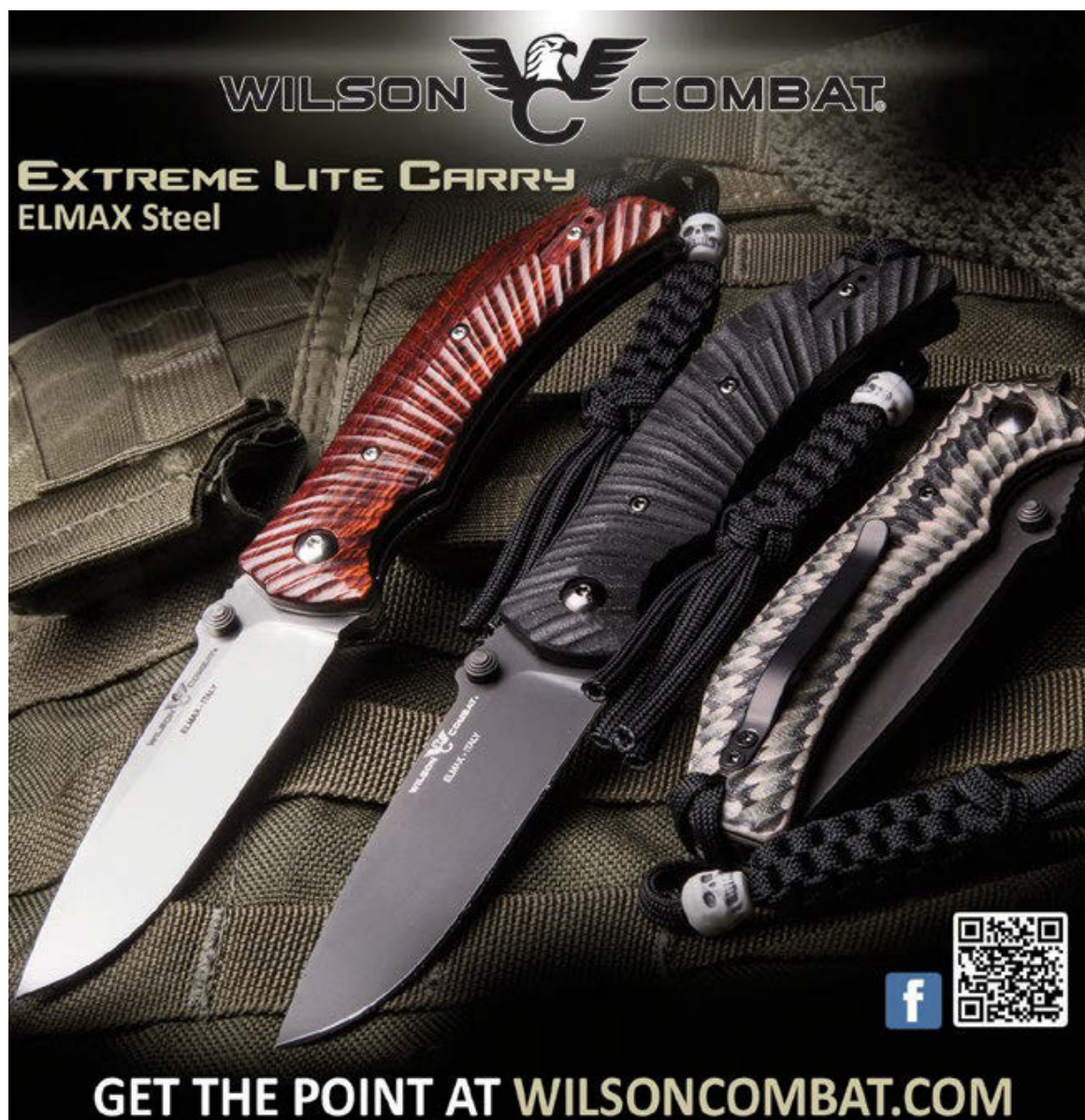
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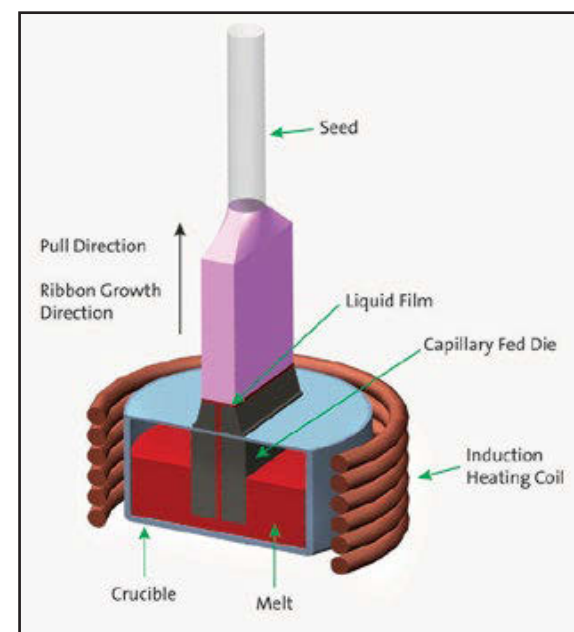
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UP ARMORED



This graphic illustrates Saint-Gobain's Edge-defined Film-fed Growth (EFG) fabrication process for creating super-strong sheets of clear sapphire panels.

of the die, a sapphire seed is lowered to the molten pool and is then pulled back up. This pulling actually freezes because of the temperature differential and enables extraction of a crystal about 2 feet long. The EFG process grows crystal in near net shape, so minimal cutting and polishing to make it perfectly clear are needed. Other processes may be less expensive, but they require a lot more post-production fabrication. We complete sheet production in a few days, not several weeks."

BREAKTHROUGH TECH

Obviously, sapphire production has come a long way. Originally, small sheets of the material were used on scanners in grocery stores because constant swiping wouldn't scratch sapphire, enabling barcode readers to work effectively. As the size of sheets grew, the material was in demand for the windows of targeting systems, once again because of its clarity. In fact, its optical properties are one of sapphire's strongest selling points. Infrared transmittance through sapphire is particularly good, making it very effective when using night-vision goggles (NVGs) or infrared cameras.

"After a good deal of research, we were able to validate large-sheet sapphire in the mid-1990s," Wooddell explained, "but we proved it for transparent armor applications only about six or seven years ago. We were the first company to commercialize any advanced ceramic material for transparent armor."

Wooddell added that the sapphire sheets are bonded with other layers of glass and polymer interlayers to make

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bulletproof panels. Sapphire is used as the strike face for windows because its hardness literally breaks bullets apart when they hit it, shattering the hardened steel cores of bullets into small pieces. The layers behind the sapphire absorb energy from bullet strikes, eliminating damage from shock.

"We talk a lot in terms of STANAG protection levels," said Wooddell. STANAG is a NATO standardization agreement that establishes performance effectiveness levels for various types of protective armor used by Allied military forces. "Sapphire's performance is excellent at lower levels with 5.56mm projectiles, the most commonly used ammunition today. As the threat gets closer to .50 caliber, used in heavy machine guns and some long-range sniper rifles, the material performs even better compared to a glass-only solution. Sapphire panels can take many high-threat strikes and survive, although its surfaces may crack. It doesn't create spider webs with lots of cracking, although layers of glass behind it may break after repeated impacts."

Despite the current 1-by-2-foot size limitation, several pieces can be put together, side by side, and they work well with no degradation in ballistic protection. If one panel is damaged after multiple heavy-caliber hits, cracks do not propagate across panels even when they are adjacent.

Enhanced protection is, of course, most meaningful for the people who benefit from it: the troops who operate the HIMARS. In addition, the clarity sapphire provides makes operation of the HIMARS vehicle safer in both threat and non-threat environments, enabling drivers and passengers to see better through windshields and windows with minimal maintenance requirements, translating into more efficient use of the system.

These capabilities are a source of pride for Wooddell and his team in Milford, which has grown by 30 percent since the company won the Army contract in 2012. "Protecting our military personnel is a tremendous responsibility, and we take it seriously," Wooddell commented. "It's really thrilling for everyone in our company to see our years of research and development pay off in ways that keep our troops safer and enable them to perform more capably. We are looking forward to completing our contract and hope that it will lead to even more uses for sapphire in military vehicles and other systems."

For more information, visit crystals.saint-gobain.com. 

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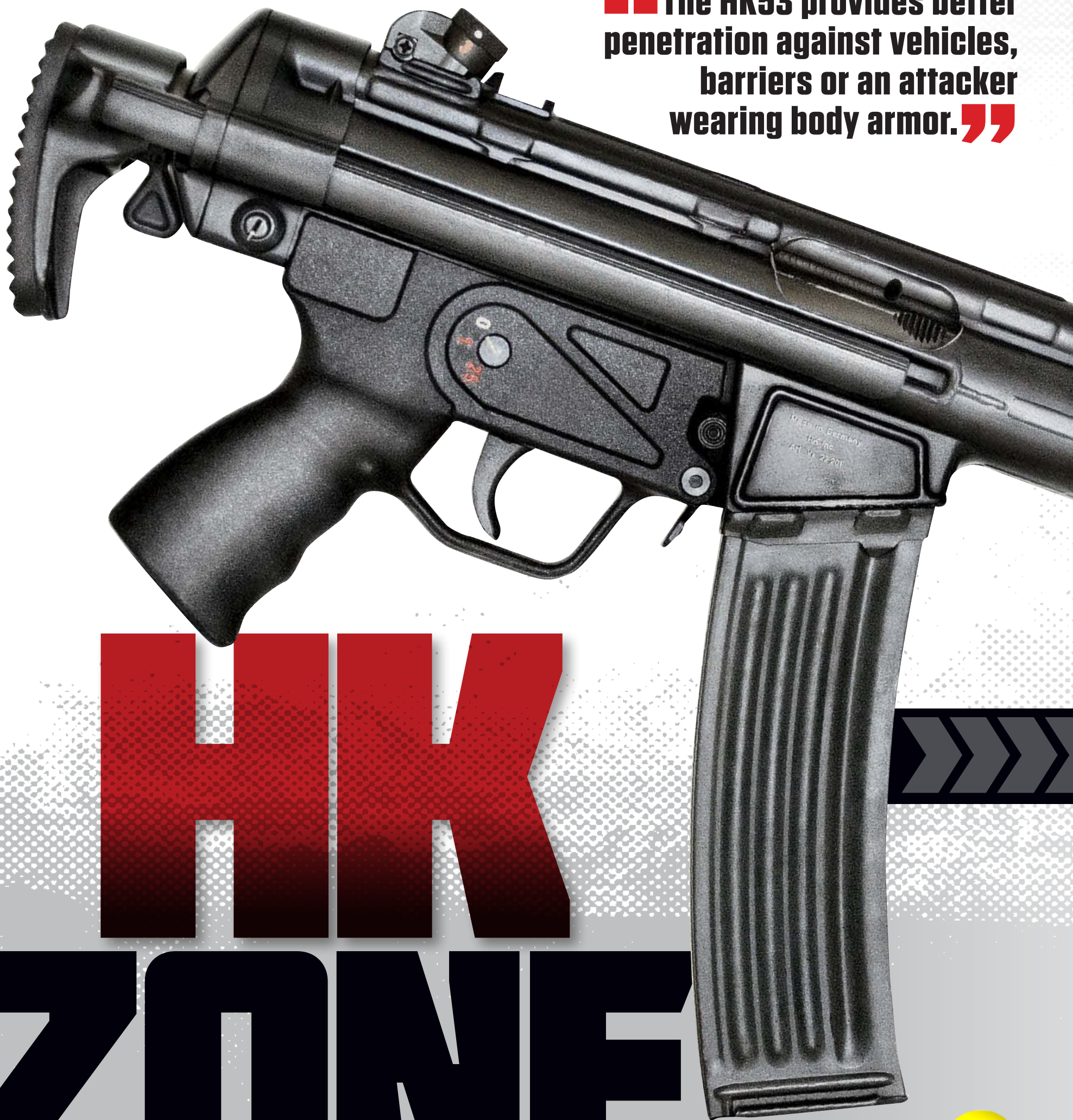
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“The HK53 provides better penetration against vehicles, barriers or an attacker wearing body armor.”



HK

ZONE



The 5.56mm NATO HK53 is almost as compact as Heckler & Koch's 9mm MP5 but offers better knockdown power downrange.

Ken MacSwan Photos



Measuring only 22.2 inches long with its stock collapsed, the HK53 features an 8.3-inch barrel, fast-targeting sights and select-fire operation.

you can transition immediately to the HK53, as the controls, sights, stock deployment, etc., are the same. Although we did not mix in MP5s the few times I worked with teams that had HK53s, it was still easy for guys who had been trained on the MP5 to master the HK53. On one team, we had a chance to shoot HK53s (we had two of them) to get used to the heavier recoil and muzzle rise compared to the MP5.

Though a bit harder to control on full-auto, the HK53 may still be fired very effectively with short bursts and a little practice. I have fired an HK53 with the four-pronged flash suppressor, but I don't remember how much it helped with muzzle flash. I've never fired an HK53 with burst-fire capability—they do exist—but the ones I've used have all had "0-1-25" selectors. Leaning into the HK53 as it is fired helps quite a bit with control.

The HK53 is based on the HK33, which is the 5.56mm assault rifle developed by HK when many armies equipped with the G3 were looking for a smaller-caliber rifle. Many shooters will be familiar with the HK93, the semi-auto version of the HK33 sold in the U.S. The collapsible stock used on the HK33A3 has been available, and I purchased one to turn my HK93 into a HK93A3. Most of the HK33s I've encountered have been in use with South American or African military units; however, various special operations units have used the HK53.

STEALTH HK ON DUTY

The first HK53 I ever encountered was with the St. Louis County Police tactical unit, which used it as their entry weapon 25 to 30 years ago. I had friends in the unit and shot the HK53 a few times with them. Later, I encountered the HK53 with a couple of European counterterror-

Hands on the tiny HK53 select-fire titan and some truly MAD civilian-legal HK-esque firepower.

BY LEROY THOMPSON

A few years ago, I was doing a VIP protection course in Canada at a hunter training camp in Alberta. One night, as I was sitting around the campfire with some of the trainees, one asked me about submachine guns for protective details and what my experiences with them had been. While discussing various points, it occurred to me that the SMG I considered best for close protection based on my experience wasn't really an SMG. Well, to some extent that's a matter of semantics, as it could be termed a rifle-caliber SMG (which is actually an oxymoron, as an SMG is usually defined as chambering a pistol cartridge). Probably a more

correct definition is that it is a compact carbine. The weapon to which I refer is the Heckler & Koch HK53.

Though the HK53 chambers the 5.56x45mm NATO round, with its stock collapsed its overall length is only 22.2 inches, which is only 0.5 inches longer than an HK MP5A3. For that extra half-inch, the user gains a much more serious weapon. Carried in a vehicle or under a coat as readily as an MP5, the HK53 provides better penetration against vehicles, barriers or an attacker wearing body armor. It also grants more effective engagement capability at longer ranges. Another advantage I found was that if you're trained on the MP5,

ist units. Units using the HK53 for entries sometimes worried about overpenetration in apartment blocks, etc., but the combination of frangible 5.56mm ammo and tests which have shown that the 5.56mm round generally does not penetrate walls as much as some 9mm ammo seem to have rendered that concern moot. Earlier HK53s had a 1-in-12-inch twist rate, which required the use of 55-grain bullets, but later versions had a 1-in-7-inch twist to handle SS109 62-grain rounds.

British special operations units, including the Special Air Service (SAS), the Special Boat Service (SBS), the Special Reconnaissance Regiment (SRR) and the former 14th Intelligence Company, have used the HK53 for many years. The HK53's combination of compactness, striking power, range and magazine capacity made it especially useful for undercover operations with these units.

On undercover operations in Northern Ireland, the HK53 was especially popular. Although operators carried the L9A1 (Browning Hi-Power) as their personal

SPEC BOX

HK53

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	8.3 inches
OA LENGTH:	22.2-29.7 inches
WEIGHT:	6.7 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	Hooded front, rotary aperture rear
ACTION:	Select-fire
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	25, 30, and 40
MSRP:	N/A

weapon, an HK53 was often carried in a surveillance vehicle to give more firepower if attacked by the IRA or other factions. Since the HK53 could be brought into action from within a vehicle, it was far more suitable than larger weapons and offered more knockdown power to stop an attack than the HK MP5. One undercover unit that found the HK53 especially well suited to

their missions in Northern Ireland was the 14th Intelligence Company. Members of this unit would often stake out IRA-controlled areas, watching for known terrorists or gathering intelligence. Normally operating in teams of two, they had radio contact to call in a response team, but for the initial period of a contact they would be on their own, when the presence of the HK53 was very comforting.

Unlike other British special operations units, the 14th Intelligence Company had female operators with a high level of firearms training. To attract less attention, a male/female team would often operate in IRA-controlled areas. In some cases when moving on foot, one of the two would carry an HK53 in a backpack, which the other could access quickly if they needed to bring it into action. Members of 14th Intelligence Company also trained with the HK MP5K, which would conceal even better than the HK53, but most of them preferred the HK53 if things went bad.

I did hear a few criticisms of the HK53 over the years from special operations

MADHKCLONES

Moore Advanced Dynamics delivers new U.S.-made, HK-style tactical weapons!

The HK series of roller-locking small arms should be familiar to students of military rifles, with the G3 being one of the most widely produced 7.62x51mm rifles in the world. The design was an immediate success, being adopted by the West German military as well as many other militaries around the world. And, due to popular demand and HK's interest in expanding into other markets, the company developed variants of the design in 5.56x45mm (as the HK33) and also 9x19mm (as the MP5). The result was an entire family of small arms that combined simplicity of operation with rugged reliability. It was these designs that became the basis of the HK civilian-legal semi-autos such as the HK91 (7.62x51mm), the HK93 (5.56x45mm) and the HK94 (9x19mm).

GOING MAD: But what is a fan of this design to do today, with the

originals not only restricted from importation for civilian sale but also no longer produced by HK? Enter Moore Advanced Dynamics, a domestic manufacturer bringing a custom shop approach to the production of these classic weapon systems—as well as a fresh approach to the designs. The result is a line of guns made up of 7.62x51mm (MAD91), 5.56x45mm (MAD33) and 9x19mm (MAD9) variants. As with most all domestically produced guns of these types, the MAD guns feature a combination of U.S.- and foreign-made parts. In the case of these guns, all the non-U.S. parts are original German HK parts. While these clones look and function like exact replicas of the HK originals, they are not authorized by HK and aren't covered by Heckler & Koch's lifetime warranty or service protection.

For those looking for something more like the HK53, there is

the MAD53 series in 5.56x45mm. This ultra-compact carbine packs the power of the 5.56mm round into a package around the same size as the 9x19mm MP5. The result is an ultra-compact powerhouse that is capable of delivering rifle power in a handily sized package.

MAD MAGAZINE: One other interesting adaptation MAD has developed is an AR mag

adapter system for the MAD33 5.56mm. The system, standard on all MAD 5.56s and available as an option for one's own HK33/HK93-style rifle, allows you to use standard AR-15-pattern mags (the company recommends the use of Magpul PMAGs, but the system is designed to work with any modern polymer or standard GI samples). (madkc.com; 913-499-8391).—Michael O. Humphries

	MAD53AR	MAD33
CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	8.3 inches	17 inches
OA LENGTH:	22.2-29.7 inches	37.25 inches
WEIGHT:	8 pounds (empty)	8 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Fixed or collapsible	Fixed or collapsible
SIGHTS:	Diopter	Diopter
ACTION:	Roller-delayed blowback	Roller-delayed blowback
FINISH:	Cerakote	Cerakote
CAPACITY:	30+1	20+1
MSRP:	\$3,375	\$2,450



MAD91	MAD33	MAD9 PISTOL	MAD9 CARBINE
7.62mm NATO	7.62mm NATO	9mm	9mm
17.7 inches	12 inches (17 w/flash suppressor)	8.9 inches	8.9 inches (16 w/faux suppressor)
40.4 inches (fixed); 33-40.25 inches (collapsible)	37.7 inches (fixed stock); 30.4-37.5 inches (collapsible)	17.3 inches	34 inches (fixed stock); 26.63-33.13 inches (collapsible)
10 pounds (empty)	9 pounds (empty)	4.8 pounds (empty)	6.2 pounds (empty)
Fixed or collapsible	Fixed or collapsible	Polymer grip	Fixed or collapsible
Diopter	Diopter	Diopter	Diopter
Roller-delayed blowback	Roller-delayed blowback	Roller-delayed blowback	Roller-delayed blowback
Cerakote	Cerakote	Cerakote	Cerakote
20+1	20+1	30+1	30+1
\$1,900	\$2,550	\$3,450	\$3,750

personnel who used it. Units such as the SAS and SBS, which did a lot of practice assaults using the HK53, found that the receiver was prone to picking up dents from it banging against vehicle interiors, ship passageways, oil rig girders and other steel. On the other hand, none of them ever mentioned their HK53 going down because of one of the dents.

Some operators who worked with other special forces using the M4, HK G36K, Steyr AUG, or with British forces armed with the L85A1, felt that it would have been better had the HK53 used STANAG magazines that would interchange with magazines from those other weapons. Instead, the HK53 required proprietary magazines. On the other hand, they found the HK53 magazines very tough and capable of standing up to harder usage than many STANAG magazines.

Since special operations units that use the HK53 fire it a lot in training, some have noted that it is prone to carbon buildup and can get very dirty when fired a lot. If used all day in training, HK53s will have to be dipped in solvent or stripped and cleaned a couple of times. Some units just take extra weapons and clean them



all when finished shooting. One other criticism is sometimes uttered: Since the HK53 tends to throw its brass forward, the sun can catch and reveal its user's position, drawing fire.

THE TAKEAWAY

Most of those same users, even when they have some misgivings about the HK53, find that the ability to conceal it so well while retaining a rifle-caliber round

The HK53 was known for being reliable and easy to conceal. It also handles very well and is quick to get on target.

and full-auto capability makes it a weapon that can be forgiven. I never did so much training with the HK53 that I had to stop because it became too dirty to run. I think the largest number of rounds I ever fired in one session was probably 200 to 300 or so. Still, on the couple of occasions I was armed with the HK53 on a security team, I made sure it was cleaned and oiled. When I did train with it, I would perform some drills in which I started with it slung beneath a jacket or coat and bring it into action, even deploying the stock. That was the way I foresaw using it, so that was the way I trained with the HK53.

As with many very useful weapons, the HK53 offers tradeoffs. To gain concealability, you give up some ballistic efficiency due to the shorter barrel. Nevertheless, it is still a more serious weapon than a 9mm submachine gun. I liked it when I was cradling it while riding in a trail vehicle, and I still like it today. Shooting it for this article just reinforced that feeling! **TW**



Tactical Shotgun Grips for Mossberg 500's and Maverick 88's combine non-slip materials with sculpted, sure grip engineering.

Shotgun Rail Mount with SideSaddle Shellholder holds shells tight, but allows for quick, easy access and removal. Mount a scope or light system on the low profile Picatinny rail.

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NEW **MISSION** GEAR 2015



Tactical Weapons presents an array of some of the newest and most noteworthy guns and gear for today's operator.



→ **DIAMONDHEAD VRS T-308 HANDGUARDS**

Diamondhead's innovative VRS T-308 free-floating handguards offer an uninterrupted rail extension and handguard in perfect alignment with the host weapon's flattop receiver. The VRS T-308 rail replaces the factory delta ring and barrel nut, and it has a modular design, meaning users can add rails and bumpers (sold separately) along the sides and bottom for accessories. The lightweight design has a comfortable, rounded, triangular shape with subtle finger grooves for a secure grip. Diamondhead currently offers 10.25-, 13.5- and 15-inch models in standard threaded and KeyMod versions and in two heights for most .308 platforms. (diamondhead-usa.com; 413-739-6970)

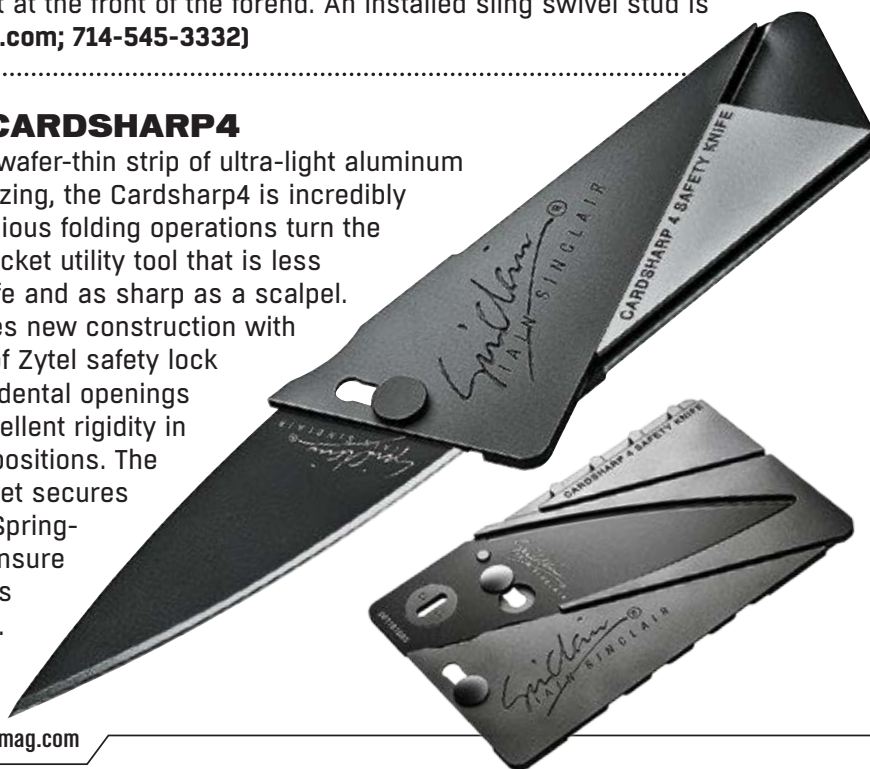


→ **MESA TACTICAL MOHAWK FOREND**

Mesa Tactical has created the Mohawk modular forend for the Remington R12/Versa Max shotgun. Developed specifically for tactical use, integral accessory pockets on the right and left sides accept inserts as required by the shooter or situation. The inserts included with the Mohawk forend are: one polymer Picatinny rail section, one flat pad for mounting other Picatinny rail sections or direct-mount accessories, two pocket covers with an integral wire opening and contoured pocket covers. The Mohawk comes standard with a ventral Picatinny mount at the front of the forend. An installed sling swivel stud is included. (mesatactical.com; 714-545-3332)

→ **IAN SINCLAIR CARDSHARP4**

CNC-machined from a wafer-thin strip of ultra-light aluminum with natural grey anodizing, the Cardsharp4 is incredibly strong. Just three ingenious folding operations turn the card into an elegant pocket utility tool that is less bulky than a pocketknife and as sharp as a scalpel. The Cardsharp4 features new construction with a two-stage, child-proof Zytel safety lock that helps prevent accidental openings and gives the knife excellent rigidity in both open and closed positions. The new, improved Zytel rivet secures the blade to the body. Spring-loaded Nitinol hinges ensure the Cardsharp4 remains flat while in card mode. (iainsinclair.com)



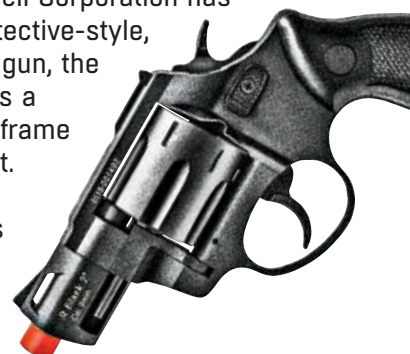
→ **IOSSO CASE POLISH**

Load your own ammo? IOSSO's new Case Polish is a bio-based formula designed to keep our environment healthy. It cleans even better than the company's original formula to remove all fouling, including carbon buildup, powder fouling, oxidation, tarnish and any other residue. Just add the Case Polish into corncob or walnut media to reduce tumbling time and protect the item from future discoloration. It gives brass casings a like-new finish. The Case Polish is available in a variety of sizes to suit both at-home and commercial reloaders. (ioisso.com; 847-437-8400)



→ **MAXSELL RX2 REVOLVER**

For 2015, the Maxsell Corporation has released a new detective-style, blank-firing starter gun, the RX2, which features a durable steel alloy frame and realistic weight. The report of the .380-caliber blanks is comparable to live rounds. This front-firing model produces a vivid muzzle flame, and the functional ejector easily expels spent cartridges. The RX2 is perfect for safe training, reenactments, films, K9 training and firearms collectors. This replica has a blaze orange marking permanently affixed to the barrel in compliance with Department of Commerce regulations. (maxarmory.com; 877-332-2343)



→ **RICOH NV-10A ENHANCED BINOCULARS**

The new NV-10A Enhanced Binoculars from RICOH are digital and come with image stabilization in addition to an atmospheric interference-reduction mode. It also has a built-in Twilight mode that enhances vision at night. The NV-10A is also water and dust proof. Furthermore, it is a functional design that is easy to use even with gloves. You can also record your view to an SD card as either a full-motion or still image. Finally, the rugged NV-10A can display your latitude and longitude using its GPS function. (ricoh.com)

PRODUCT SHOWCASE



→ MAGPUL MOE & ZHUKOV AK ACCESSORIES

Magpul has released several upgrades for AKs. First up is the MOE AK series, which includes a fixed, reinforced-polymer buttstock with a top storage compartment and sling-mounting points. This stock works perfectly with Magpul's MOE AK grip. The MOE handguard, also made of reinforced polymer, features

M-LOK accessory slots, ridges for better traction and a vented cover that goes over the gas tube. Magpul's Zhukov line features a durable AK handguard with a full-length aluminum chassis and the company's new M-LOK slots for attaching accessories like lights and lasers. (magpul.com; 877-462-4785)



→ **MCMILLAN TAC-50 A1 STOCK** For 2015, McMillan has made several improvements to the original fiberglass TAC-50 stock, resulting in the next-gen TAC-50 A1. The .50-caliber rifle stock's forearm is now 5 inches longer to move the bipod forward for more precise sighting adjustments. The new buttstock also has an integral, vertically adjustable cheekpiece that is much more comfortable to shoot the rifle with, and the pistol grip is a bit slimmer to fit a wider range of hand sizes. The thick rubber buttpad helps absorb recoil, and it has a curved shape to help lock the rifle into your shoulder pocket. (mcmillanusa.com; 877-365-6148)



← ZEROBRAVO REOS

The ZeroBravo Rapid Engagement Offset Sight (REOS) is a lightweight and simple solution for engaging close-range targets when using magnified optics. Machined from 6061 aircraft-grade aluminum and protected by mil-spec Type III hardcoat anodizing, the REOS mounts directly to the scope tube, allowing the user to mount them on AR-style weapons as well as precision and hunting rifles. Utilizing the two ghost-ring sights, the user simply cants the rifle, acquires the target through the ghost rings and engages the target. At less than 2 ounces, the REOS provide the function required without the added weight, snag hazards or cost commonly associated with traditional offset sights. (zerobravo.com)



→ RHINO ARMS PDW

The Rhino Arms Personal-Defense Weapon (PDW) is one of the most compact non-NFA variations of the AR-15 available. The stock quickly extends with a pull and rigidly locks into any of the five available positions. All controls are easily reached without removing your strong hand from the gun. The PDW is available in 5.56mm NATO or 300 Blackout with a 14.5-inch, light-contour barrel. SBR configurations

are also available. The PDW also comes with Rhino's Flash Tamer, an adjustable gas block, an ambidextrous safety selector, an Ergo grip and a carbon-fiber handguard with Magpul's M-LOK system. (rhinoarms.com; 855-257-4466)

→ BURRIS TACTICAL KITS

Burris' new Tactical Kits will help tactical and competitive AR shooters get ready to roll. The kits include a quality prism sight and either a secondary red-dot sight or an AR-Tripler, plus mounts, all packaged in a rugged carry case. They're complete, ready-to-go optics platforms, at over a \$100 savings compared to buying each item separately. The AR-332 Tactical Kit features the 3X AR-332 with the FastFire II reflex sight, while the AR-536 Tactical Kit comes with a 5X AR-536 with the FastFire II. Finally, the AR-1X Tactical Kit comes with the AR-1X prism sight and the AR-Tripler. (burrisoptics.com; 970-356-1670)



← LYMAN TURBOSONIC 1200 CASE CLEANER

Lyman has introduced a new ultrasonic case cleaner, the TurboSonic 1200, that features a new easy-to-use and easy-to-see touch-screen control panel. This new model has a mid-size,

6.5-by-5.4-by-2.6-inch tank

that can process up to 350 9mm cases. When used with Lyman's specially formulated cleaning solutions, the unit's powerful transducers and uniquely engineered cleaning basket combine to deliver superior cleaning. The ultrasonic cavitation quickly attacks, dissolves and lifts case fouling inside and out, even in primer pockets. (lymanproducts.com; 860-632-2020)

→ SECUREIT MODEL 84 TACTICAL RACK

The Model 84 Tactical Rack offers unlimited configurations for long gun, pistols and gear. Constructed from 14-gauge steel, the unit features a two-part saddle system that simply adjusts to store any long gun as well shelves, pistol pegs, magnetic hooks, bins and trays that can be re positioned by the user without the use of any tools. Measuring 84 inches tall, 36 inches wide and 15 inches deep, the Tactical Rack is protected by bi-fold doors with a nine-point locking system. (secureittactical.com; 800-651-8835)



→ **SPRINGFIELD MARINE CORPS OPERATOR**

Springfield Armory has expanded its Operator lineup to include the Marine Corps Operator, a Government Model 1911 in .45 ACP. In addition to ambidextrous thumb safeties and lightweight delta hammers, the Operator 1911 designs feature accessory rails for the addition of a tactical light or laser aiming device. The Marine Corps Operator features a forged steel frame finished in olive drab Armory Kote, G10 grips and a new serration pattern on the frontstrap that helps keep the gun in hand but won't abrade or snag on clothing. Within the black Armory Koted slide is a stainless steel, 5-inch, match-grade barrel. (springfield-armory.com; 800-680-6686)



← **SUREFIRE Y300 ULTRA**

SureFire's new Y300 Ultra flashlight, featuring an ultra-high-output LED that generates a maximum output of 500 lumens, is also ultra-compact, at just 3.6 inches in length and weighing only 5.5 ounces when loaded with two CR123A lithium batteries. In addition to its 500-lumen max output, the dual-output Y300 Ultra also generates a useful 15-lumen beam on its lower setting. It also has a unique magnetic platform that makes the light easy to attach to a variety of metal surfaces for hands-free use. (surefire.com; 800-828-8809)



→ **BERETTA M9A3**

Beretta has redesigned its battle-proven M9 platform with several next-gen enhancements. The M9A3 has a slimmer grip to accommodate more shooters with smaller hands. The frame also features a Picatinny rail for mounting accessories, and it's given an earth tone anodizing to blend into desert surroundings. More frame enhancements include a beveled mag well, new grip panels and an enlarged magazine release button. The slide is given a Cerakote earth tone finish. The M9A3 also features tritium sights, and the front sight can easily be swapped out. The barrel is also threaded for suppressor use. (beretta.com)

→ **SAVAGE ARMS A17** The .17 Hornady Magnum Rimfire (HMR) is a fast little cartridge built from a necked-down .22 Magnum. Because of its speed, however, many shooters have only been able to reliably run the .17 HMR in bolt-action rifles. Now Savage Arms has changed all that with the introduction of its new A17, a semi-automatic rifle built specifically for the .17 HMR. The A17 utilizes a delayed-blowback action and features a hardened steel receiver and a chrome-plated bolt for greater strength. The A17 also comes with a 10-round rotary magazine and an adjustable trigger. (savagearms.com; 413-642-4260)



→ **VDI INTEGRAL BOLT CARRIERS**

The new Integral DI Carrier from VooDoo Innovations (VDI) was designed to improve the service life and durability of the direct impingement carrier. The VDI Integral DI Carrier eliminates the potential for carrier-to-key separation due to carrier key screws stripping, fracturing or becoming un-staked. The new Integral carrier has an improved gas flow path with no obstructions or shelves for carbon to deposit and build up, eliminating the potential for gas obstructions to seize the operation of your carrier. The 20-percent reduction in carrier weight in these low-mass carriers decreases the reciprocal mass, reducing felt recoil and increasing the tune-ability for every application. (voodooinnovations.com; 813-867-4242)

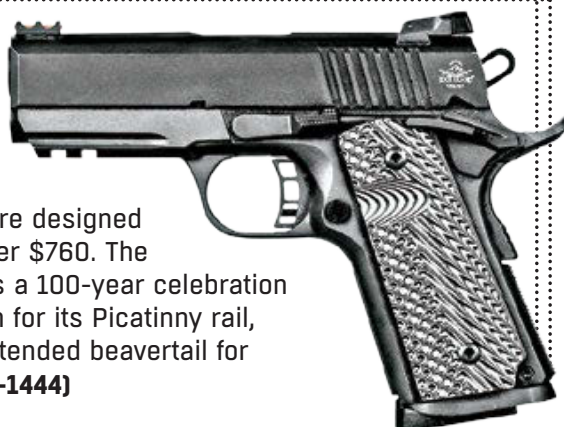


→ **SIG SAUER BRAVO 4**

One of the most trusted names in firearms is now dealing in high-quality optics. Designed for ARs, Sig Sauer's new fixed-power, prism-based Bravo sights are optimized for close- to medium-range targeting situations where speed is a must. The prism design allows for compact overall dimensions with high-resolution performance. The Bravo 4 with Stealth ID is as tough on the outside as it is on the inside—this is one rugged optic. The Bravo 4 offers an unmatched 45-percent wider field of view than the leading competitor. The flat, distortion-free target image also boasts unprecedented edge-to-edge clarity by means of low dispersion glass and a spherical lens design. (sigsauer.com; 603-610-3000)

→ **ROCK ISLAND ARMORY TAC ULTRA SERIES COMPACT**

Rock Island Armory has unveiled two new TAC Ultra Series pistols in .45 ACP and 9mm, which come with seven- and eight-round magazines, respectively. Both pistols are designed for concealed carry and are available for under \$760. The TAC Ultra Series was first revealed in 2010 as a 100-year celebration of the 1911 platform. The series is best known for its Picatinny rail, ambidextrous safety, combat hammer and extended beavertail for optimal recoil control. (armscor.com; 775-537-1444)



PRODUCT SHOWCASE

➔ BARNES RANGEAR AMMO

For those seeking ammunition that performs consistently, Barnes Bullets' RangeAR ammo delivers higher velocities, flatter trajectories and ultimate accuracy at an affordable price. Top-quality brass is paired with a lead-free, copper-jacketed, zinc-core Open Tip Flat Base (OTFB) projectile. The robust zinc core provides excellent performance in AR-platform weapons with quick-twist barrels. Specialized propellants optimized for ARs ensure that RangeAR ammunition offers superior performance in these high-performance platforms of any barrel length. Priced right for high-volume training, the RangeAR line will initially be offered in 52-grain 5.56mm and 90-grain 300 AAC Blackout loads. (barnesbullets.com; 800-574-9200)



➔ KAHLES K624i

The highly popular Kahles K624i has received significant upgrades for 2015. One of our nation's preeminent competitive marksmen and instructors, Shannon Kay, helped develop the SKMR and SKMR2 reticles in conjunction with HPS' Jeff Huber to bring two versatile reticle options to the Kahles product line. The new 2015 MOA version of the K624i utilizes a similar MOA-based reticle with 0.25-MOA adjustment turrets. This scope has also been upgraded optically and achieves superior performance in all categories. The Kahles K624i features a solid, one-piece scope body made from bar stock aluminum billet for enhanced durability. (kahles.at; 866-606-8779)



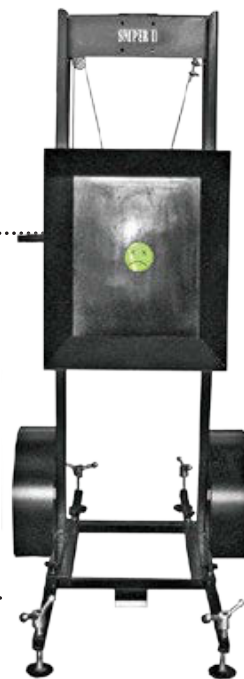
➔ DEL-TON SIERRA 3G

Del-Ton has built an AR-platform rifle designed specifically for dominating 3-Gun competitions—the Sierra 3G. The rifle has a .223 Wylde chamber, which helps it handle both .223 Remington and 5.56mm NATO

ammunition better for enhanced accuracy and precision. Del-Ton outfits the rifle with a 16-inch barrel with a 1-in-8-inch twist rate and a custom muzzle brake that was designed specifically for this rifle in-house by Del-Ton. The rifle also utilizes a mid-length gas system for softer recoil and smoother shooting. More features include a Samson Evolution handguard, a single-stage, match-grade trigger, an Ergo grip and a Magpul CTR stock. (del-ton.com; 910-645-2172)

➔ BULLET BUNKER SNIPER II

Bullet Bunker has unveiled the Sniper II model, a bullet trap created specifically for what highly trained sharp shooters need to train. The Sniper II is adjustable and can sit on the ground or be cranked up to over 6 feet tall. Moreover, the unit has large, solid tires, making it easy to move around indoors or out. Finally, the trap has four retractable legs that are deployed to lend stability. All this means you can create real-life scenarios and change target situations to suit your training needs. (thebulletbunker.com; 419-660-0228)



➔ GEMTECH SUPPRESSED BOLT CARRIER

The Gemtech Suppressed Bolt Carrier (SBC) is designed to increase the reliability of any suppressed 7.62mm or 5.56mm AR-platform firearm. The adjustable bolt carrier is a drop-in replacement and will allow the shooter to choose between suppressed and unsuppressed settings without any permanent modifications to the firearm. No longer will you need to change gas blocks, buffers or any other components. Not only that, but with the Gemtech SBC, there is a reduction in carrier speed and less felt recoil, bringing the cyclical rate of the suppressed rifle down to unsuppressed levels. (gem-tech.com; 208-939-7222)



COMBLOC CENTRAL

Continued from page 30

Some manufacturers are making AKs entirely from U.S. parts, and Rifle Dynamics plans to soon be one of these. "We are in the process of bringing our own U.S.-made AK to market purpose-built to the highest quality and to be the equal of the best U.S.-made M4s," added Fuller.

COMBLOC WEAPONS TRAINING

Of course, Fuller started out offering training for the AK, and that is still a big part of what Rifle Dynamics offers. "Our Com-Bloc weapon classes have been extremely successful and highly praised by military and law enforcement agencies nationwide." The classes are available at the company headquarters in Nevada or at the customer's location. Most popular is the two-day AK Armorer/Operator Course.

Taught personally by Jim Fuller with help from Billy Cho and other Rifle Dynamics instructors, this course is designed to teach the student to operate and maintain the AK completely independently. The first day is an armorer's course focused on all maintenance, repair and upgrade functions for the rifle. Students spend eight hours understanding the history of the AK and its variants, learning the parts inside and out, and how the rifle operates and functions.

Students are encouraged to bring their own AKs, especially ones that may be having issues. This gives the class an opportunity to identify and correct any problems on a live gun. Of course, the class also covers complete disassembly and assembly, field-stripping, performing diagnostics and keeping the rifle running properly. Finally, students receive instruction on upgrades and alterations to the design as well as troubleshooting, safety and precautions.

Day two of this comprehensive course covers the operator aspect, and it's spent on the range conducting live-fire drills and exercises. The training is based on the original Russian military manual of arms, modified for an American audience. It covers basic operation, test-firing and rifle zeroing procedures and a review of the AK combat doctrine. The class concludes with movement drills, clearing malfunctions and rapid combat reloads. The class is open to anyone, and the only prerequisite is to have basic range safety skills.

It is preferred that students provide their own rifles and equipment, but this is available for sale/rent if needed. Rifle Dynamics does provide all the tools needed for the armorer portion of the class. Private and custom courses are also available. For more information, visit rifledynamics.com or call 702-860-7774. **TW**



TACTICAL WEAPONS

2015 Readership Survey

SHARE YOUR OPINION AND WIN!

100 winners will be randomly selected from the in-publication and online completed questionnaires received by May 22, 2015 to win a FREE Harris annual.

TACTICAL WEAPONS magazine is interested in your attitude, opinions, lifestyle and online presence. Knowing more about your interests will assist us in providing you with an even better magazine! Please go online to <http://tpr.tactical-weapons.sgizmo.com/s3/> to complete the survey or take a moment to answer the questions below and mail it to the address shown at the end of the questionnaire, along with

any additional information you wish to provide. As a token of our appreciation for your prompt response by May 22, 2015, we'll enter your name into a prize drawing to be eligible to win a complimentary Harris Firearms magazine.

No Tricks or Gimmicks! The (100) winners will be randomly chosen. We thank you for participating.

About **TACTICAL WEAPONS**

1. How did you obtain your copy of **TACTICAL WEAPONS**?

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ☐ Subscription | ☐ Drugstore | ☐ A friend |
| ☐ Newsstand | ☐ Bookstore | ☐ Convenience Store |
| ☐ Website/Internet | ☐ Sporting goods store | ☐ Independent Gun Shop |
| ☐ Mass Merchandiser | ☐ Trade Show | ☐ Other (Specify) _____ |

2. How many of the last 4 issues of **TACTICAL WEAPONS** have you read or looked through?

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ 4 out of 4 issues | ☐ 1 out of 4 issues |
| ☐ 3 out of 4 issues | ☐ None of the last 4 issues |
| ☐ 2 out of 4 issues | ☐ New subscriber/reader |

3. Considering all the times you pick it up, how much time, in total, do you spend reading or looking through a typical issue of **TACTICAL WEAPONS**

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Less than 30 minutes | ☐ 3 to less than 4 hours |
| ☐ 30 minutes to less than 1 hour | ☐ 4 to less than 5 hours |
| ☐ 1 to less than 2 hours | ☐ 5 hours or more |
| ☐ 2 to less than 3 hours | |

4. Overall, how would you rate **TACTICAL WEAPONS** – the content, design... everything?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ☐ Excellent | ☐ Good |
| ☐ Very good | ☐ Poor |

Please rate the quality of this magazine on the following:

	Excellent	Very good	Fair	Poor
Content	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cover	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ease of Reading	☐	☐	☐	☐
Layout and Design	☐	☐	☐	☐
Photography	☐	☐	☐	☐
Writing	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please rate the following editorial sections:

	Excellent	Very good	Fair	Poor
Briefing Room	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tactical Rides	☐	☐	☐	☐
New Mission Gear	☐	☐	☐	☐
Give 'Em Hell	☐	☐	☐	☐
High Tech	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. Which of the following actions, if any, have you taken in the past 12 months as a result of reading **TACTICAL WEAPONS**?

- ☐ Requested information or a catalog
☐ Visited advertised website
☐ Purchased an advertised product / service at a retail establishment
☐ Recommended an advertised product or service
☐ Changed brands because of an advertisement
☐ Filed an ad for future reference
☐ Told a friend about something you saw in the magazine

6. Do you consume media digitally? That is for example: read magazines online, watch t.v. clips from shows in a tablet, etc.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No (Skip to Q 11)

7. Would you be interested in a digital subscription of **TACTICAL WEAPONS**?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No (Skip to Q 11)

8. What would you be willing to pay for a digital subscription of **TACTICAL WEAPONS**? _____

9. Which of the following do you use to consume media:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| ☐ iPhone | ☐ Tablet |
| ☐ Android | ☐ Desktop computer |
| ☐ Blackberry | ☐ Laptop computer |
| ☐ iPad | |

10. How likely are you to engage with branded content from advertisers (e.g. stories, videos)?

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Very likely | ☐ Somewhat unlikely |
| ☐ Somewhat likely | ☐ Not likely at all |

11. What do you do with a typical issue of **TACTICAL WEAPONS** when you and other household members have finished reading it? (Please check ALL that apply.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Save the entire issue | ☐ Discard/Recycle (Skip to Q13) |
| ☐ Save articles of interest | ☐ Pass it along to others (Skip to Q13) |
| ☐ Place it in a public area | |

12. How many times in the past year have you referred to back issues or articles saved of **TACTICAL WEAPONS**?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Less than 2 times | ☐ 6 – 10 times |
| ☐ 2 – 5 times | ☐ 11 times or more |

13. What other magazines have you read at least three out of the last four issues?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ <i>Gun World</i> | ☐ <i>Soldier of Fortune</i> |
| ☐ <i>American Rifleman</i> | ☐ <i>Guns & Ammo</i> |
| ☐ <i>SWAT</i> | ☐ <i>Shooting Times</i> |
| ☐ <i>GUNS</i> | ☐ <i>American Handgunner</i> |
| ☐ <i>RECOIL</i> | ☐ <i>Combat Handguns</i> |
| | ☐ <i>Special Weapons For Military & Police</i> |

14. How do you rate yourself as a shooter?

- ☐ Experienced ☐ Active ☐ Novice

15. How many handguns do you own?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ☐ None | ☐ 5 – 9 |
| ☐ 1 | ☐ 10 – 19 |
| ☐ 2 | ☐ 20 – 49 |
| ☐ 3 – 4 | ☐ 50 or more |

16. Have you had any custom work performed on any handguns you currently own?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

17. Do you plan on customizing any of your handguns?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

18. Which manufacturer and caliber of handguns do you currently own or plan to purchase.

Manufacturer	Caliber	Currently own	Plan to buy	Autopistol	Revolver
_____		☐	☐	☐	☐
_____		☐	☐	☐	☐
_____		☐	☐	☐	☐
_____		☐	☐	☐	☐
_____		☐	☐	☐	☐

19. Which of the following unexpired gun permits do you possess?

☐ Carry ☐ Hunting ☐ Other ☐ None

20. How many current concealed carry permits do you have?

☐ 1 ☐ 4
☐ 2 ☐ 5 or more
☐ 3 ☐ None, no not carry concealed

21. What purposes do you use your firearm? Check all that apply.

☐ Home security ☐ Competition
☐ Range ☐ On the job
☐ Personal security ☐ Other
☐ Hunting

22. Do you belong to, or intend to join any of the following clubs/associations?

	Current member	Intend to join	Former member
NSSF	☐	☐	☐
NRA	☐	☐	☐

23. How often do you participate in the following shooting sports/hobbies per year:

	1-4 times	5-9 times	10-19 times	20+ times	Never
Big Game hunting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fowl hunting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Target/Trap/Skeet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
New Shooter/Hunter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Competitive Shooter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Plinker	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cowboy Action Participant	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

24. With whom do you generally shoot with?

☐ Children (under 18 years old) ☐ Coworkers
☐ Children (over 18 years old) ☐ Fellow Club Members
☐ Other Family Members ☐ Clients (as a guide/outfitter)
☐ Friends ☐ Nobody (participate alone)

25. Do you currently own, or plan to purchase (within the next 12 months) any of the following?

	Currently own	Plan to buy
Knife (non-kitchen cutlery)	☐	☐
Conceal carry holster	☐	☐
Leather holster	☐	☐
Shotgun	☐	☐
Polymer holster	☐	☐
Nylon holster	☐	☐
Gun safe	☐	☐
Gun safety device	☐	☐
Dot Sight	☐	☐
Personal Protection	☐	☐
Laser equipment	☐	☐
Non-lethal equipment	☐	☐
Custom made holster	☐	☐
Reloading equipment	☐	☐
Custom made knife	☐	☐
Chronograph	☐	☐
Night vision equipment	☐	☐
Flashlight	☐	☐

26. How many followers/friends do you have on:

	1-50	51-100	101-249	250+	None
Facebook	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Twitter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Instagram	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
LinkedIn	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

27. How do you commonly access the Internet?

☐ iPhone ☐ Tablet
☐ Android ☐ Desktop computer
☐ Blackberry ☐ Laptop computer
☐ iPad ☐ Do not access the internet (Skip to Q31)

28. Do you research potential shooting product purchases on the Internet?

☐ Yes ☐ No

29. Have you ever purchased shooting equipment products over the Internet?

☐ Yes ☐ No

30. Do you read/follow online blogs that are about shooting/guns?

☐ Yes ☐ No

31. What is your gender?

☐ Male ☐ Female

32. Please select your age.

☐ Under 18 ☐ 35-39 ☐ 60-64
☐ 18-21 ☐ 40-44 ☐ 65-or above
☐ 22-24 ☐ 45-49 ☐ Prefer not to answer
☐ 25-29 ☐ 50-54
☐ 30-34 ☐ 55-59

33. What is the highest level of education you have attained to date?

☐ High school or less
☐ Attended college
☐ Graduated from college
☐ Postgraduate study without degree
☐ Masters degree
☐ Doctoral degree
☐ Other professional degree (M.D., J.D., etc.)
☐ Prefer not to answer

34. Which of the following best describes your current employment situation:

☐ Employed Full-Time
☐ Employed Part-Time
☐ Self-employed
☐ Not employed, but looking for work
☐ Not employed and not looking for work
☐ Homemaker
☐ Retired
☐ Student
☐ Prefer Not to Answer

35. Are you now, or have you been employed in any of the following lines of work?

☐ Military
☐ Law enforcement (SWAT, Patrol or Security)
☐ Security
☐ Private guard
☐ Executive Protection
☐ Private investigator
☐ Coast Guard/National Guard
☐ None of the above

36. What was your total household income before taxes last year?

☐ Under \$20,000
☐ \$20,000 – \$39,999
☐ \$40,000 – \$59,999
☐ \$60,000 – \$79,999
☐ \$80,000 – \$99,999
☐ \$100,000 or more

If you have additional comments to make, please put them on a separate sheet of paper.

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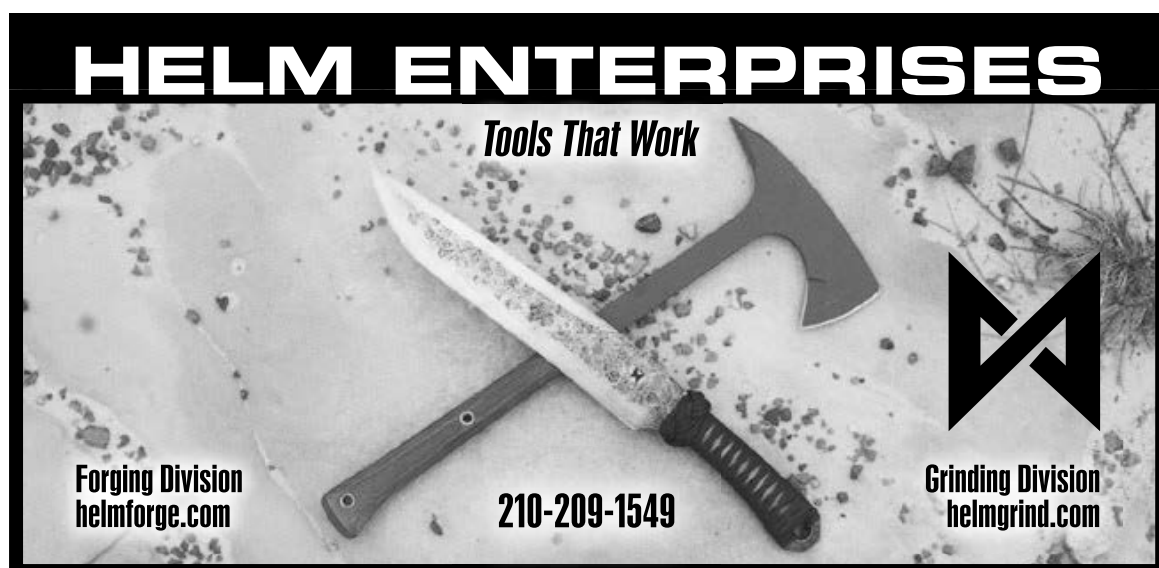
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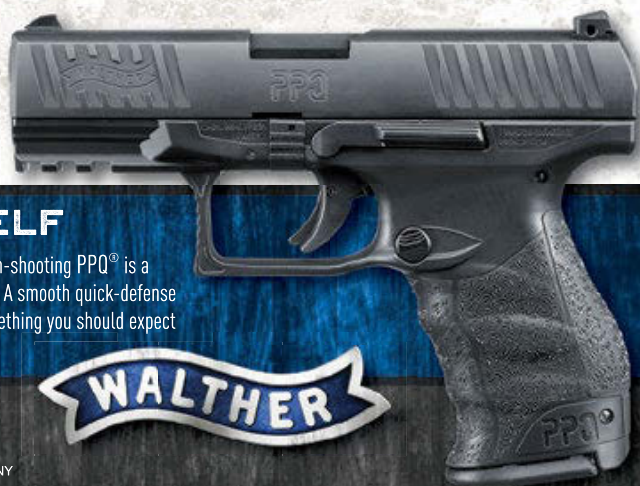


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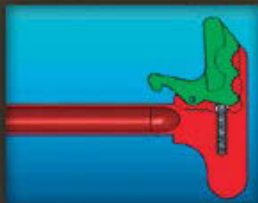
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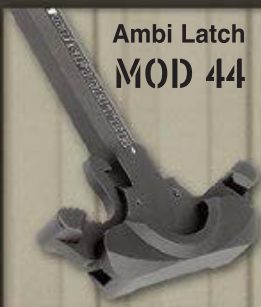
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Many high-dollar precision rifles these days are built to survive the end of the world. But they tend to be heavy and cumbersome, especially if they include a lot of adjustments. Sometimes simple is better, and this M40-66 rifle is a perfect example of that. I've never been much of a collector—rifles are tools—and this one needed a task outside sitting on a bench or lying on a mat. It seemed well suited to hunting, not just precision rifle work, so I took the classic sporter into the mountains.

I loaded the rifle into my Eberlestock X3 pack to hike into the mountains behind my range for some field testing. The first thing I noticed is the M40-66's weight—it carried perfectly in this pack. It was also very comfortable to shoot in kneeling, seated and other typical field positions. Precision rifle stocks are made for prone shooting; everything else is a compromise. Hunting stocks are the opposite, and this is a nice one. The M40-66 is very fast and comfortable to shoot from field-expedient positions. It even blends in pretty well, especially given the colors in Utah right now. Setting up on a couple of well-hidden targets, I engaged steel from field-expedient positions, mostly kneeling, at 100 to 400 yards with great effect. The scope's power range was perfect, the glass was crystal clear, and mil-dots are very useful for most.

The M40-66 is a fun-to-shoot, easy-to-carry tack driver. Not only is it a look back to precision rifles of old, but it's also a solid hunting rifle in a proven caliber.

MULTI-MISSION BEAUTY

The '66 Company's M40-66 is a fantastic rifle. It is a fully custom build with some nostalgia built in. It was a nice departure from heavy, modern precision rifles with space-age designs and adjustments galore. More importantly, it has a dual purpose, a useful one beyond sniping paper. You can comfortably use it outside the range deck. It even maintains the appearance of a nice hunting rifle. Just like in 1966, the M40-66 is a really accurate varmint/competition rifle, not just a sniper rifle.

If you just like really accurate rifles and remember the joy of a wooden stock and simple operation, this is a fantastic rifle. It also works well for those looking for the basic feel of an M40 built in 1966 without precise replication and the cost associated with it. It truly is a well-built, multi-purpose rifle that just looks cool. It was a privilege to spend time with The '66 Company M40-66, and I truly wish it could stick around. For more information, visit m40-66.com or call 844-996-4066. 

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DANIEL DEFENSE
Danieldefense.com

DARK STORM INDUSTRIES
Dark-storm.com

DECAL GRIP
Decalgrip.com

DIAMONDHEAD USA
Diamondhead-usa.com

DRAKE ASSOCIATES
Drakeassociates.us

EOTECH
Eotechinc.com

FNH USA
Fnhusa.com

GEMTECH
Gem-tech.com

GENERAL TIRE
Generaltire.com

GLOCK
Glock.com

GTUL
Mygtul.com

GUNTEC USA
Guntecusa.com

HARFORD ENGRAVING
Harengser.com

HELM ENTERPRISES
Helmforge.com; Helmgrind.com

HINTERLAND OUTFITTERS
Hinterlandoutfitters.com

HOGUE
Hogueinc.com

HOLSTEROPS
Holsterops.com

HORNADY
Hornady.com

IWI US
Iwi.us

KAHLES USA
Kahlesusa.com

KIMBER
Kimberamerica.com

LEWIS MACHINE & TOOL
Lmtdefense.com

LUTH-AR
Luth-ar.com

MAGPUL
Magpul.com

MAXSELL
Maxarmory.com

MCMILLAN
Mcmillanusa.com

MOORE ADVANCED DYNAMICS
Madmfgkc.com

MOSSBERG
Mossberg.com

NIGHTFORCE USA INC.
Nightforceoptics.com

PEARCE GRIP
Pearcegrip.com

PERSONAL DEFENSE WORLD™
Personaldefenseworld.com

PHASE 5 TACTICAL
Phase5tactical.com

POF USA
Pof-usa.com

PRIMARY WEAPONS
Primaryweapons.com

ROCK RIVER ARMS
Rockriverarms.com

RUGER
Ruger.com

RWC GROUP
Rwcgroupllc.com

SCCY
Sccy.com

SECUREIT TACTICAL
Secureittactical.com

SEEKINS PRECISION
Seekinsprecision.com

SIG SAUER
Sigsauer.com

SMITH & WESSON
Smith-wesson.com

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY
Springfield-armory.com

STARK EQUIPMENT
Starkgrips.com

STEYR ARMS
Steyrarms.com

STOCKY'S
Newriflestocks.com

TACSTAR
Tacstar.com

TACTICAL LIFE™
Tactical-life.com

TACTICAL RIFLES
M40-66.com

TOPS TACTICAL
Topsknives.com

TRIJICON
Trijicon.com

WALTHER ARMS
Waltherarms.com

WILSON COMBAT
Wilsoncombat.com

WINDHAM WEAPONRY
Windhamweaponry.com

BY R. LEE ERMEY <<<

GREAT SNIPERS Ungrateful Libs!



THEY CAUGHT Clint Eastwood crossing open ground, very visible. They opened fire with everything they had. Almost every liberal media guru out there had Clint's newest movie, *American Sniper*, in their sights as they unleashed barrages of reviews, newspaper and internet columns, even tweets. Their mission: to brand the movie as, "Almost Too Dumb to Criticize," the words *Rolling Stone* used. The roly-poly chowhound Michael Moore tweeted, "My uncle killed by sniper in WW2. We were taught snipers were cowards. Will shoot u in the back. Snipers aren't heroes. And invaders r worse." There were many others. I imagine you saw at least some of them.

The result of all this pseudo-intellectual firepower? Well, it's like they were shooting blanks! Americans went to see *American Sniper* in droves. In battalions and regiments. It was easily the most-talked-about movie of this past year. When I saw it in the theater, people remained in their seats after the movie had ended and the credits were rolling. They did not want to leave such an emotional and compelling event.

However, what was clearly a filmmaking and box office triumph for Clint Eastwood, and a hero's recognition for sniper Chris Kyle, became a new political football for many liberal critics to throw around. They not only attacked the idea of snipers, belittled Chris Kyle's family drama and personal sacrifices, but they also cried foul over the film's creators not blaming George Bush and Dick Cheney for the war. Same old, same old. It goes all the way back to Vietnam, when the liberal establishment convinced Americans that we were losing the war.

Even the bleeding-heart anti-hunters jumped on the movie due to the deer-hunting scenes! Still,



American Sniper, directed by Clint Eastwood and starring Bradley Cooper (top), depicts real snipers fighting in Iraq (bottom).

The Gunny is only too happy all these antics did not keep Americans away from the film, or keep them from spreading the word to their friends and family. The critical sideswipes at *Sniper* did likely influence many in the filmmaking establishment to vote against it in the Academy Awards. It had several nominations, including Best Picture, but only won in the Best Sound Editing category. Hollywood has its fervent supporters of our military, but it also has more than enough men and women who wouldn't give our troops and their achievements the time of day. And I'll bet that most of these slimy scumbags have never served their country, nor do they have family members who have served. The word "patriotism" is foreign to some of these people.

Speaking of Vietnam, many may remember we had an amazing Marine sniper in action out there, Carlos Hathcock, who was credited with 93 kills that were confirmed by an officer accompanying him.

Hathcock himself estimated that he killed between 300 and 400 enemy personnel in his Vietnam duty. Hathcock wore a white feather in his bush hat, and the VC, who had a bounty said to be \$30,000 on his life, called him "White Feather."

It seems to me that sniping is the most dangerous job in infantry today. The sniper and his spotter go way out there in front. They're alone in enemy territory. They find a hide that's a good vantage point, and they protect our troops.

When you're out there on a limb the way our snipers are, you not only must take shots that seem impossible by normal marksmanship standards, but your use of terrain cover and camo can either keep you alive or betray you. Snipers take out other snipers—as you can see in *American Sniper*. A bullet coming from way, way out there can erase you in an instant if you make a mistake. Like the one made by the deadly Viet Cong sniper called "Cobra," who killed several Marines and was said to have been dispatched to take out "White Feather."

Carlos Hathcock caught a flash of Cobra's scope and fired directly at the lens. His round went right down the tube of the scope and

into Cobra's eye and brain. Hathcock's marksmanship eliminated another infamous VC sniper, a female. She was called "Apache," and was known for torturing captured Marines and Republic of Vietnam troops by letting them bleed to death. Her days of torturing our Marines were over when Hathcock got her in his scope.

I am particularly impressed by the words of Fox News columnist Pete Hegseth, who, in a piece about *American Sniper*, wrote, "Clint Eastwood's *American Sniper* has struck a cord with the American people, and did so by tapping into the deepest civic values we have as Americans—duty, honor, fidelity, courage, love for country... and a love for others."

"However, no war movie can live on the big screen without a spew of liberal backlash... Thankfully, some things speak louder than cowardly tweets... The movie is on pace to become one of the top-grossing films of the year... Middle America is the beating heart of our nation and remains the first in line to selflessly strap on their boots to defend the very freedoms that people like Michael Moore use to criticize them."

Semper Fi! **TV**

SPEAKING OF FILMMAKING...

The cameras are rolling on a new Gunny TV show called *GunnyTime with R. Lee Erme*, a fully immersive, host-driven series focusing on weapons and weapons technology from the past, present and future. The Gunny will get a chance to scratch his itchy trigger finger as he plays with some amazing weapons and weaponized vehicles, and consults with some of today's most top-notch experts. *GunnyTime* airs Wednesdays at 8 p.m. EST beginning April 15 on The Outdoor Channel, with 11 original episodes. — Lamar Underwood



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